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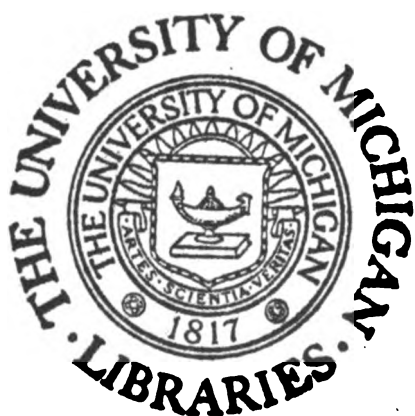


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# *Private and Personal*

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BRIGADIER GENERAL  
W. H. H. WATERS, CMG, C.V.O.









**“PRIVATE AND PERSONAL”**

*By the Same Author*

**"SECRET AND  
CONFIDENTIAL"**

**The Experiences of a Military  
Attaché                      With Illustrations**

'He has written a capital book, full of interest and humour, and without a dull page in it.'—*The Observer*.

'His experiences yield a great deal of unusual information. A most entertaining book.'—*Sunday Times*.





THE RT. HON. SIR F. C. LASCELLES, P.C., G.C.B.

[*Siraine*

[*Frontispiece*

# **“PRIVATE AND PERSONAL”**

**FURTHER EXPERIENCES OF A MILITARY ATTACHÉ**

*all right*  
**BY BRIG.-GENERAL W. H-H. WATERS**  
**C.M.G., C.V.O.**

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## INTRODUCTION

THE title has been selected as the contents of this volume may, I think, be fairly described as private and personal, although they deal chiefly with official matters.

The Prologue, which comprises the first three chapters, gives a sketch of my school life at the Lycée Impérial de Versailles from 1867 to 1870, and at the Friedrich-Wilhelm's Gymnasium in Berlin from 1870 until 1872. Several of my school friends in France and Germany rose afterwards to prominent positions in the public service, and the two seats of learning gave an insight into the national characteristics of both countries.

Act I relates chiefly to my military attachéship at Berlin from 1900 until 1908 ; for two-thirds of that period the Boer War was in progress, and during the whole of it the tragedy of 1914 loomed larger and larger on the horizon as time went on, in spite of at least one statesmanlike effort to avert it, namely, the project for an Anglo-German alliance.

Act II is concerned with the four years 1906-10, when I commanded the British troops of occupation in the international garrison of North China, where present events were also casting their shadows before them, presaging a vast change in the relations between Westerner and Oriental.

The Epilogue offers a very few brief observations on the existing situation in East and West as it presents itself to the author, for circumstances in the former region have been largely influenced by those in the latter.

Instead of confining myself to a bald recital of my experiences, some inferences have been drawn and opinions expressed ; while I think they are justified by events, others may sharply challenge them.



It was only in 1914, I believe, that the term "war guilt" was coined, presumably with the object of differentiating the causes of the Great War from those of all previous wars; the magnitude of the World Tragedy certainly eclipsed all former struggles, but the causes seem to have been always the same. This time there has been singular unanimity in fastening the onus of the crime—for crime it was—on Germany alone. I do not wish to pose as a self-righteous Englishman, but my conviction is that England, as represented by her statesmen, was in 1914 the only Power with absolutely clean hands. They loathed the idea of war, but I think they chose the wrong way to prevent it.

Germany, I believe, also wanted peace—except her military party, which, like every other one, wished for war; but she had not gone the right way to work; there had been too much sabre-rattling; a Warrior Emperor is really out of place in the twentieth century. Documents prove that all the other belligerent European Governments wanted war; they thought they had a soft thing. The system then, as now, has war as the only real arbiter.

My opinion is that secret agreements imperilling the lives and fortunes of hundreds of millions should no longer be permitted; people of this country, at any rate, are so educated that it is not complimentary to them that Parliament should be kept in ignorance of vital matters, and often be deliberately misled. Public opinion in England can form quite as good a judgment on great questions as individual statesmen—sometimes a better one—if time for reflection be granted.

In the United States no Government can commit the country to any foreign entanglement without the sanction of Congress, whose members will act as the feelings of their constituents demand that they shall act; surely the homogeneous British people are worthy of similar treatment?

A quarter of a century ago armaments had already attained such huge dimensions that I reported what their inevitable outcome must be at no distant date. They were a fertile soil for secret diplomacy, whose ever-

spreading tentacles became at last inextricably entangled. There is no difference between secret treaties and secret conversations ; indeed the latter are the more dangerous of the two methods, for they often induce a Government to deny its intentions and obligations. A handful of instances, culled from hundreds of similar ones, are quoted in these pages so as to give the general reader, who is unacquainted with official life, some idea of the ceaseless intriguing which went on among Governments, and led inevitably to the tragedy of 1914.

Even the closest allies deceived each other. France and Russia, for example, had been bound together by the strongest ties for nearly twenty years when, on October 27/November 9, 1912, the Russian Ambassador in Paris reported to St. Petersburg the complaint of Monsieur Poincaré, soon to be President of the Republic, that the terms of the Russo-Italian (Racconigi) pact of 1909 had not been communicated to him, whereupon the Ambassador retorted that neither had the French Government informed the Russian one of the details of the much earlier Franco-Italian agreement of 1902 ! Were men of this stamp likely to be honest with our peace-loving statesmen ?

These secret treaties and conversations had placed Europe, before 1914, in a state of such highly unstable equilibrium that a tiny principality like Serbia was able to upset it, and involve the whole world in the crash.

My view always was that England would be in a far stronger position, in default of the unchallengeable combination of an Anglo-German alliance, if she kept free from foreign entanglements, and when the war came she had to carry on not one but half a dozen gigantic struggles for her very existence. Our ally, Monsieur Clemenceau, was Prime Minister of France in 1919 when he really accused us of hypocrisy, and declared in the Chamber that Belgium was merely a pretext for our entry into the war ; perhaps he relied on the statement made by Count Benckendorff, the late lamented Russian ambassador in London, to the Russian Foreign Office on August 8/16, 1911, that Sir Edward Grey had told him England must back France in the event of a Franco-German war.

The violation of Belgium was not then contemplated by the British Government, although I had reported from Berlin some years earlier that this would happen, because the Vosges route was strategically and tactically too cramped for the size of the German armies. Such conduct must be reprobated, but the Germans were also afraid that Belgium might be persuaded to join France on the outbreak of war. Teutonic armies would then be awaiting an attack on their own soil, unless they should be the first to enter Belgium, and the Germans considered it better for fighting to occur outside their own frontier.

My view remains what it always was, namely, that the formation of the Triple Entente hastened the catastrophe, for it caused the international scales to be so extremely delicately balanced.

Negotiations concerning foreign affairs must, of course, be carried on behind closed doors, but once an agreement has been reached it should be announced to the country for ratification or rejection ; the same remark applies to " conversations " which contemplate war. If the Cause appeals to our people, their response will be what it always has been, and, besides, the hands of the Government would be enormously strengthened, for on the country would then lie the onus for anything that might happen.

If England had, before the event, declared her intention of supporting France and Russia in their war against Germany, my experience of foreigners teaches me that Austria would have been prevented by Germany from issuing her ultimatum to Serbia, for without German aid the Dual Monarchy would not have ventured to face Russia single-handed ; the Crown Prince's party, which believed that England never intended to fight, would have been overcome. The respite, however, could only have been brief.

As long as the present system of threats and force continues the League of Nations cannot function properly ; to-day it is controlled by statesmen most of whom reckon in terms of Armaments and Secret Diplomacy ; they always have done this, and they have no faith in any other plan.

If France should of her own initiative evacuate occupied

Germany, this would be the greatest move towards ensuring peace that could be taken. She would, indeed, be in a stronger military position, for the maintenance of some fifty or sixty thousand troops in the Rhineland is a weakness for her, and she could easily throw double that number there from France in the event of any real threat of aggression. At present her action shows that her statesmen are guided by what we were told at the Lycée de Versailles before 1870, namely, that France's rightful frontier was the left bank of the Rhine, which is a curious commentary on the Alsace-Lorraine question of spoliation. French statesmen to-day cannot allow the League of Nations to fulfil the purpose for which it was set up, and so the festering sore in the German side is kept open.

The corollary seems to be that neither the League nor any similar body can function efficiently until there has been another stupendous upheaval in Europe, after which the present system may be altered for the better. Suppose, for example, that Italy makes war—when money is available for the purpose—on France with the object of recovering the French Riviera and annexing other possessions of the Republic, the Germans would rise as one man. If, on the other hand, the French Government should voluntarily evacuate German soil, the effect for good would be incalculable; but this seems too much to hope for, and things must take their course.

My conclusion is that until different methods are brought into play the only chance for peace in Europe lies in the United States keeping a tight hold on the purse-strings. If they should cancel the debts owing to them, the money would be spent chiefly on armaments, so that to my mind the Americans are acting in the best interests of humanity. England can consider this question from a strictly impartial standpoint, for she would gain nothing by cancellation, because the receipts from her debtors, which already more or less counterbalance her payments to the great Western Republic, would then automatically cease; continental countries, however, would devote their windfalls to fresh preparations—possibly successful ones—for making the Old World try once more to eat up itself.

Expenditure on huge armaments, besides leading to diplomatic intrigue and internecine strife, is also unproductive in time of peace. At this moment there are more than two million and a half soldiers under arms in Europe alone ; none of them can cost less than £50 a year to keep and clothe, and as they are of good physique it seems fair to estimate that each of them could produce wealth to the amount of at least £150 annually. Hence we arrive at a total of £500,000,000 expended unproductively every year ; as the actual figures are higher than those given here, the balance would leave an ample margin for all real military needs everywhere.

Turning now to the contents of the volume, the more or less passive dislike of England, which had existed in Germany throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, burst into a violent flame when the struggle in South Africa broke out in 1899 ; officials, highly placed private individuals, and industrialists, supported by the Press, went to extreme lengths, and caused German citizens generally to feel that England was a bullying and rapacious Power.

The passive dislike of this country in Germany had arisen about the time when William I became King of Prussia in 1861 ; England was thought to be too grandmotherly, and Mr. Delane, the famous editor of the mighty *Times*, was considered to have given good grounds for this dislike by his immense influence on English public opinion. When Prussia became too powerful to be patronized, the unpopularity of the Empress Frederick increased, for she did not get on with Bismarck, the national hero, and William II, before he ascended the throne, expressed his resentment to the Emperor Alexander III<sup>1</sup> of Russia at what he described as the attempts to make him see things as Queen Victoria and her daughter saw them. As he grew older, however, and had the task of ruling on his shoulders, he formed a great admiration for his "unparalleled grandmamma" ; their temperaments had something in common.

The Kaiser will loom large in history, and in describing

<sup>1</sup> His letter, dated May 25, 1884, is in the Archives at Moscow.

my relations with him it has been my endeavour throughout to write without a trace of partisanship. Like most other statesmen, he calculated everything in terms of armaments, and thought, as he told me on May 29, 1901, that peace would stand a better chance if England should join one or other of the two great European coalitions, but armaments were becoming prohibitively costly, and the end was bound to come before long; when Russia mobilized Germany had to follow suit.

The question is discussed whether there was any possibility of averting the Great War not merely from day to day but until reductions in armaments should have brought about a happier situation. The only practical proposal was, in my opinion, that put forward by William II at Marlborough House on February 5, 1901, for an Anglo-German alliance; if this had come to pass, the other Powers must then have gradually recognized the futility of arming against such an invincible combination as that of the mistress of the seas with the greatest military Power in Europe, the two being also by far the wealthiest, and disposing of almost unlimited resources. Armaments everywhere must then have been reduced to reasonable proportions.

The charge has frequently been brought against the Kaiser that his chief aim was to bring about the downfall of England, but it is desirable to differentiate between his resentment at pressure from relations both before and after he ascended the throne and his outlook as German Emperor; he often differed from his English relations, and his principal object as Sovereign was the progress and prosperity of his own country, although the methods which he sometimes employed therefor can frequently be sharply criticized. His impulsive temperament occasionally caused revulsions of feeling; at one time he thought this country was rapidly degenerating; at another he was most anxious to be in close alliance with her, and this desire was, I think, uppermost in his mind. Germans often blamed him for being too pro-English. Failing an alliance, I feared there would be war between us.

If the Kaiser had thought he might compass England's

ruin, he would not have tried to render his project more difficult of accomplishment by endeavouring, several times to my knowledge, to get far-reaching improvements effected in the organization of our land forces. This, however, is exactly what he did do, and it was his scheme, reported by me to London, which was eventually put into practice. During my three years as military attaché he often spoke to me about his plan for the creation of our Territorial Army as it is now constituted. More than five years were to elapse between the date when he first outlined it to me and the time when it was put into operation on the lines which he had originally suggested ; but the delay was not his fault. Everybody knows that in the absence of that magnificent force, and its capacity for rapid expansion, the Entente would have been in a desperate position when the war came, for some military leaders had sadly miscalculated, and had not expected that the help of the new army would be absolutely indispensable.

The German Emperor and I did not, as shall be seen, always agree, but my opinion is that he relished argument if one were not afraid to argue with him ; usually, however, he lived in a false atmosphere, for his own entourage was as a rule nervous about contradicting him, and he was also sometimes aggravatingly interfering.

Turning now to China, those best qualified to form an opinion, Westerners and Chinese, told me twenty years ago that she was changing rapidly, and Yuan-Shi-kai, the future Emperor of a day, declared that his fellow countrymen were only awaiting their opportunity to abrogate the treaties giving foreigners special privileges ; his argument was that those treaties had been imposed by force, and were inequitable.

I do not pretend to be competent to forecast the future of China with her tireless millions beyond saying that the old order of things as regards the Westerner has gone, apparently never to return. What new adjustments will result we do not know, but the effect on trade is likely to be immense. In 1900, the year of the greatest anti-foreign movement hitherto known, it was the reactionaries,

supported by the Manchu dynasty, who sponsored the Boxer rising, for they loathed all change, and detested the foreigner. To-day it is Young China, educated largely abroad, which is striving to modernize itself with Western learning and arms in order also to humble the foreigner, so that this goal is common to both parties while each is struggling for supremacy in its own country. The age-long traditions of China are utterly opposed to Communism, which is not likely to acquire great influence there.

China's opportunity came when, to the delight of Orientals as expressed by their Press, Europe began, in 1914, what they termed the Suicide of the West, a process which another cataclysm might well consummate. The prestige of the Westerner in Oriental eyes has already been sadly blemished, if it has not altogether vanished, by the murderous conflict, and we at any rate are in sore need of China's markets.

I have not uttered any political opinions in this book any more than I did in *Secret and Confidential*; this is mentioned because two reviewers of that work—amongst a large number all over the world whose flattering encouragement has brought this volume on their heads—thought differently; one said that I am evidently a Tory and a courtier, while the other was pained to think me a disciple of Mr. Lloyd George.

While holding strong views on Armaments and Secret Diplomacy, I do not wish to be dogmatic nor to call for the impossible. St. Paul, in exhorting mankind to try to live peaceably, recognized that this was not always possible in his day, and since then causes of quarrel have multiplied. Absolute disarmament is obviously both impossible and undesirable, but colossal forces in time of peace are sure to lead to war, and they engender Secret Diplomacy.

The idea is revolting, and given the opportunity a nation, which has suffered its horrors, may rise in fury against those who failed to save it from the consequences. I am not wise after the event, for as soon as the Revolution in Russia broke out in 1917 I warned the British Government (*Secret and Confidential*, p. 380)



what would happen ; the prediction did not require any special far-sightedness.

In the old German empire, centuries ago, the incessant wars caused such havoc that it was at last decided to submit controversies between States to arbiters, called "austregae," whose decisions were to be final. If modern Europe cannot go so far as this, arbitration preceding fighting should, one may think, be possible. The struggle for existence makes nations as well as individuals quarrelsome in some sense, but they need not become degenerate through the absence of swollen armaments. Arguing with the Kaiser in October 1901, I told him that in my peace-loving country wonderful deeds of heroism are performed daily by all kinds of people who think nothing of them ; valour is not dependent on a man being dressed as a soldier.

Many believe that the German Government had resolved on war in 1914 because it called up reservists early in that summer. All reservists were called up once for training, men living abroad being sent to the nearest garrison or ships. When I was at Berlin the United States protested against its citizens being summoned, but without avail ; if a reservist did not appear he was regarded as a deserter on revisiting his native land. In 1902 at manœuvres my batman, who had hurt his leg and could not march, came from Milwaukee.

A valued friend and great physician, Dr. Bodington of Winchester, read my literary first-born, and then sent me Mr. Fowler's *Modern English Usage* to improve my style. That entrancing book has bemused me ; I can only hope my language, if not very elegant, is clear.

The sixty years skimmed over in these pages have witnessed the downfall of six great empires, because the *fatal specific of physical force* was employed. Europe has now the choice of two roads, one leading to Commonsense, and the other to Chaos.

W. H-H. WATERS.

October 1927.

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## **PROLOGUE**





# “PRIVATE AND PERSONAL”

## CHAPTER I

THREE of us, my mother, a sister returning to school, and I, landed at Calais about three o'clock in the morning towards the end of September 1867. The weather was cold, windy, and wet, the sea had been tempestuous, and the steamer was cramped. Modern travellers, who are constantly complaining about lack of sufficient accommodation, can scarcely realize the discomforts which we ancient ones suffered, but neither the tossing nor the horrid smells affected me.

It was my first visit to beautiful France; about a fortnight previously the unwelcome and startling news had been broken to me that I was to leave my preparatory school for the Lycée Impérial de Versailles, or Lycée Hoche as it is called to-day. The result of three years' previous instruction in the French language had been to impart a sketchy knowledge of grammar, and my parents wished me to combine a real study of French with my general education. Both of them knew France well, and my mother was related to some French families of the *ancien régime*, besides which one of my grand-uncles had been educated partly in a French military academy, and was subsequently on the staff of La Fayette during the revolutionary war. A first cousin of my mother's also acquired notoriety. Everybody knows that the Bourbons were very savage on their return to Paris after Waterloo; Ney and other distinguished men were executed, and a prominent nobleman, General de Lavalette, was also under sentence of death for having espoused Napoleon's cause.

This relative of mine was a great personal friend of Lavalette's, and was instrumental in aiding him to escape

from the condemned cell. This enraged the royalists, who, determined to execute somebody in place of the elusive one, ordained that he, Captain Hely-Hutchinson, should be shot. He was a Guards officer, and the Duke of Wellington thought this would be going too far, so that in consequence of his Grace's representations the sentence was commuted to one of three months' imprisonment, which involved the loss of his commission. He was, however, reinstated shortly afterwards, and eventually succeeded his uncle as Earl of Donoughmore, but was known to the end of his days, in French as well as in English society, as Lavalette Hely-Hutchinson.

On that September morning in 1867 my thoughts were far away from those distinguished men ; dog-tired, dirty, and hungry, rest was what I wanted ; my party had quite a fair amount of hand baggage, and a considerable portion of it had been allotted to me. Trudging wearily along in the dark, some distance behind everybody else, my toe struck an iron ring fixed in the pier ; lurching forward, my parcels flew in all directions, while my hands were in the void over the sea. If the ring had been situated a foot or so nearer to the edge there would probably have been an end of me there and then. I set a safer course and we all met at the Custom House, whence we passed on to the train for Paris, but a basket of food had been lost in the water, and there were no restaurant cars in those days.

Our troubles were not quite at an end : some French ladies were in the compartment into which we climbed, and one of them began to scream and gesticulate, my mother's attempts to pacify her meeting with no success. Presently an inspector came to examine the tickets and both disputants had their say. On my inquiry as to what had caused the trouble, it appeared that we were in a compartment reserved for ladies only, and the appearance of a wretched little urchin, aged eleven, on the scene had struck horror into the mind of the objector. But the inspector stood my friend ; he was also, I heard, a family man. As many people dislike fresh air and ventilation when travelling, the journey to the capital was wearisome enough, but we arrived there at last, and went on to Versailles.

My sister returned to her school, which was kept by Mademoiselle Velten, who married the French statesman, Jules Favre, after the Franco-German War of 1870-71. My sister was very happy there, her companions being nice and sympathetic, while the house was sunny and had a large garden. My mother and I stayed for a few days at a comfortable hostelry, the Hôtel Vatel, so named after the celebrated *chef de cuisine*. There was some sightseeing to be done, which suited me well, and in those days the palace of Versailles and the gardens were maintained in really good order. The town itself was also lively, for there was a large garrison composed of troops of the Imperial Guard, whose variegated uniforms made a splendid show.

All good things come to an end some time, and the day arrived when I was handed over to the Lycée. My heart sank when the gate clanged behind me; probably a more forlorn little boy did not exist at the moment, and nearly a year was to elapse before I was to return home for the holidays. The big school looked what it was in fact, namely a prison, and was just the same on the occasion of my last visit sixty years after my first one. The buildings, commenced in 1767, were intended originally for a convent. Queen Marie Leczinska, wife of Louis XV, had set her heart on the project, and devoted to their erection practically all her own fortune, and for a term of four years after her death, in 1768, that of her two daughters. The ground was granted by her husband, who owned all the land on which the city was built; part of the Lycée grounds had belonged to the estate of the court favourite, Madame de Montespan. The convent was dedicated in perpetuity to the nuns of the order of St. Augustine, and was abolished by the revolutionaries sixteen years after its inauguration, another instance of the fallacy of human edicts. Soon after 1790 it was converted into its present form as one of the greatest of French centres of instruction, but a gloomy prison.

Much useless worry in life, however, is obviated by making the best of things as they are, and my three years at Versailles were very useful to me afterwards; also they

enabled me to appreciate more the good things which came my way later. My existence there was, on the whole, by no means unpleasant ; I was the recipient of numerous kindnesses, and as I was transferred to Berlin after three years it is, perhaps, worth while to give some account of the two scholastic methods. They are still the same in both countries.

It was an unusual experience for one of my race. Life in a French family is quite a different thing ; one is thrown in contact with few people, whereas in a Lycée a boy meets hundreds of his own age, who are drawn from practically every section of society, and there is no place to compare with it for gaining a very thorough insight into French character.

The institution at Versailles stood on a special footing above that of other provincial establishments of the same kind, because it ranked with those of Paris, a privilege which entitles its students to compete with those of the capital for university distinctions ; it was, in fact, an annex to the University of France, and thus drew to itself hundreds of boys from all parts of the country.

The life, as shall be seen presently, was utterly different from the free existence of my preparatory school in England. There were also two kinds of day boys : those who came at 6.30 a.m., and had breakfast, dinner, and supper at the Lycée, leaving it at eight o'clock after the last meal, which followed the preparation for the morrow ; they wore the regulation uniform laid down for boarders ; the remainder arrived only in time for the actual classes, namely, from eight to ten o'clock in the forenoon, and from half-past two until half-past four in the afternoon.

Among the grand total of a thousand or so there were very few day boys ; these lived either with their parents or in families which took paying guests. I would not advise anyone to send his son as a boarder if this could be avoided. In my time there were about a dozen English boys, nearly all much older than myself, whom I saw only when we were marched to church on Sundays, and most of them were to enter businesses in England which imported goods from France. Many months passed before

I had a compatriot in my part of the Lycée, and there was none at all in any of my classes.

The Lycée was divided into four sections, or colleges as they are termed; each one of these was absolutely shut off from any of the others, with its own playground—a bare quadrangle of hard mud with a paved iron shed for inclement weather—class-rooms, and large dormitories with thirty or forty boys in each. The intention was and is to isolate entirely from each other the boys of different ages; two brothers, in different colleges, would not see one another until the end of the scholastic year unless they were taken out together by relatives or authorized friends.

I was allotted to the junior section—the *petit collège* as it was called—although my classical and other education in England had been considerably more advanced than in my new surroundings. The boys in my class, the seventh, were of much my own age, some of them being older. The two lowest classes were the eighth and the preparatory one, children of six and a half years being admitted to the latter. The discipline and interior economy were supposed to be less severe than in the *grand collège*.

The course of instruction as a whole was extremely comprehensive; it included all the usual subjects from reading and writing upwards, as well as chemistry, physics, philosophy, and rhetoric. Boys were also prepared for the army, navy, forestry, and commercial examinations, in a general sense. The professors were first-rate men of a class superior to the ushers—or *pions*, as we called them—who had charge of the boys, when not in class, during every minute of the twenty-four hours.

Early rising was the rule, and as soon as we were dressed—a few minutes after six o'clock—we went to the studies, where we remained until breakfast, which was served at seven. This consisted of a plate of very thin soup and dry bread. Dinner was at midday, when more thin soup, followed by a slice of decidedly tough beef with haricot beans or lentils (no potatoes or butter), and bread, comprised the repast. Once weekly there was a fast day, when no meat was served, but only vegetables, while on two or

three special occasions in a year a small piece of excellent pastry was issued. Supper was at eight, and consisted of a slice of cold meat and dry bread. Once a year the feast of St. Charlemagne was honoured, when the dinner was something very special, and each boy was given a glass of champagne. The usual beverage at dinner and supper was claret well diluted with water, whence its name *abondance*—a very good one, for the mixture could scarcely have been weaker. It could certainly never have given a boy a taste for alcohol. The supply of bread at meals was unlimited, but, otherwise, there was no such thing as a second helping ; I do not recollect that anybody ever wanted one.

A good many of the lucky boys, who were taken out on Sundays by their parents or authorized "correspondents" as they were termed, used to go provided with a large net bag ; these nets are to be seen everywhere in France ; they roll up into a very small compass, but their capacity is wonderful, and many of the scholars made their own. Their parents or friends were in the habit of giving the owners supplies of delicacies, such as chocolates, sweets, pies, pastry, and so forth, which helped to make up for the food shortage at the Lycée. Some boys would return with large stocks, but French thrift—shall we say ?—discountenanced the sharing of any of these good things with those less fortunately situated. Bargaining, however, was not uncommon : a small piece of chocolate, for instance, would be bartered for a tiny penknife.

A liberal table at the school was not to be expected, because the annual fees were, to British ideas, ridiculously low. They included everything down to books, paper, pens, and ink, but not blotting-paper, which was replaced by the more economical sand. There were only four possible extras, music, singing, dancing, and fencing, and I greatly enjoyed the last-named.

Parents, therefore, knew exactly where they stood ; there were no charges for flannels, sweaters, or anything connected with games, because there were no games in our sense of the word ; they were extemporized, rather like making bricks without straw, but gymnastics were

compulsory and thorough; the French are the finest marchers in Europe, and probably, in the world. Those of us who had not expended all our little amount of weekly pocket-money on extra food sold by the authorized school hawkers, could buy balls. As these were made of kid, stuffed with grass, and were not really round, this was a profitable business for the traders; at any rate, their percentage of profit was very high.

This improvization of games led, on one occasion, to a disastrous accident. Great iron gates led down to the playground of each college, and some boys were fond of swinging backwards and forwards on them. There was a huge cesspool situated close to these gates, which was cleared periodically in the daytime, when the boys were in school, but the work was suspended during our play-hours. A fat Spanish youth, who had no objection to smells, was swinging one day when the pit was open. Presently there was a loud crash and a dense cloud of dust arose. When it had partly cleared away it was found that the wretched boy had been flung head over heels into the horrible slough. As the pit was too deep for him to climb out unaided, and as nobody was brave enough to offer assistance, he had to wait until a ladder could be procured. Gate swinging was at a discount after this episode.

A French boy was asked one day how he amused himself during the recreation hour, and the reply was: "We walk up and down and talk." This exactly expresses the situation, for improvised games were not much patronized. The underlying idea was, as the French statesman, M. Ribot, once explained, not to tarnish the *vigueur élégante* of French youth by letting them play rough sports, which, he said, do not suit his countrymen.

Parents may like to hear what was the cost of a first-rate education at a great Lycée. For a full boarder, as I was, it ranged from £38 to £52 yearly, payable in three instalments; of course the franc has been reckoned here at par of exchange. I said there were no extras, but this is not altogether correct, for each parent had also to pay two francs (1s. 8d.) annually to cover the postage of the



quarterly reports, and twopence-halfpenny for the receipt stamp on each instalment. This last custom is still in general use in France.

Every boy wore uniform of a military type, buttoned-up tunic and shako ; he also had to have a complete trousseau down to knife, fork, spoon, and drinking goblet. A curious item in it was that of nightcaps, four for small boys and five for older ones. They had been omitted from my outfit, and consternation arose : it was not credited that I had not only never seen but had never even heard of such an article. After much misgiving, and consultation with the excellent Sisters of Charity attached to the *petit collège*, it was decided to let me run the risk of premature death by going to bed bare-headed ; *Nicholas Nickleby* was not then in my thesaurus.

One would think that, if nightcaps were necessary to health, overcoats would surely be part of a boy's equipment ; it was sufficiently cold at times in the Lycée itself, when the hot-air heating apparatus occasionally went out of business, but out of doors, in autumn and winter, the want of them was often severely felt. We were always marched twice weekly, two and two, big boys and little ones alike, until we had covered a few miles, when we were permitted to break the ranks. Until this happened those who had no overcoats—and they were in the majority—tramped shivering along for quite a distance. Night attire was unknown ; boys slept in their shirts, and, if they wished to do so, in their drawers as well ; my night-shirts were, at first, until the novelty had worn off, a source of much astonishment and amusement.

Corporal punishment was forbidden in France as in other continental countries, but it was not unusual for an usher to give a boy a resounding smack on the ear with the palm of his hand. The ordinary official penalties comprised writing out so many hundreds of lines, picket duty, and arrest, which last included defaulters' drill during the play hours. Picket duty, put into plain English, really meant being put in the corner like a little child. For serious offences the *séquestre* or *cachot* was available ; this was solitary confinement in a Black Hole,

and was enough to frighten a nervous boy out of his wits ; the duration of internment therein never exceeded forty-eight hours, I believe, and recourse was very seldom had to it, the scholars having a wholesome fear of this *sanction*.

In one of Marryat's novels there is a story of a captain who used to order the last man down from aloft at sail drill to be flogged ; the idea was to make the ship's company smart. Some of the ushers at the Lycée adopted a similar principle : they would give us—say three minutes—to get into bed after folding up our clothes neatly, and the last boy in his sheets would be given so many hours of defaulters' drill. I never heard anybody grumble about this ; it was thoroughly in accord with the French temperament.

It is the custom in France to delegate large powers to subordinates ; a non-commissioned officer can inflict punishments beyond the authority of a British company commander, and this system was ingrained in the blood : it happened, from time to time, when an usher was called away from the study, that a big boy would arrogate to himself the position of deputy, and write, on the black-board, the name of anybody whom he considered to be taking advantage of teacher's absence. If the under-study happened to be a favourite of the usher's, the victim was likely to be punished, and nobody was surprised. A *Chargé d'Affaires* was often nominated officially. The dormitories were patrolled at night, at uncertain hours, by ushers, and lights were kept burning for reasons needless to mention, but no ray of sunshine ever penetrated our rooms ; the architecture was not adapted for it.

Hygiene and sanitation were of very little account ; it was a question of the survival of the fittest, and the boys, being thoroughly acclimatized, did not suffer from this neglect. As regards sanitation generally the less said the better ; the curious can still see what it is like. A foot-bath was supplied occasionally, and for the summer months there was a magnificent open-air swimming-pond in the park of the palace of Versailles for those of us who liked the sport ; otherwise baths were unknown in the

school. We are often considered cracked for our mania in this respect.

A friend of mine in the diplomatic service was ill at Rome with fever, and sent for an Italian doctor, who was somewhat puzzled by the case. At last he inquired whether the patient was in the habit of taking baths; on receiving a reply in the affirmative he exclaimed, "Ah, no wonder you are ill!" Plans had been made for me to perform my customary ablutions, and on the first occasion I was led off to the school hospital by a Sister of Charity, who ushered me into a large *salle de bains*. As she could not speak English and I knew no French, it was some little time before I grasped the fact that I was to disrobe in her presence; all went well until only my shirt remained on my person, but, when I began to remove it, she uttered a loud scream. Much abashed, I drew the garment on again, whereupon she made signs for me to enter the bath with it on. This seemed so strange that I expostulated with a further series of signs, and understood, at last, that to enter a bath in a state of nature would almost certainly lead to inflammation of the lungs. Eventually the good creature allowed herself to be over-persuaded, although with many misgivings.

Even for the little boys there was no health supervision except in one particular: this consisted in giving most of them a tonic—such as cod-liver oil, for example—in the study before being marched off to breakfast; apparently most of the little French stomachs required something of the sort. Otherwise one was left to one's own devices about reporting sick. I was twelve years of age when, one day, a series of very painful headaches commenced; they continued for some time, and I recollect going into a kind of stone-flagged cell where I lay down in order to cool my head against the flags; the next thing I remembered was finding myself in bed in hospital, suffering from a sharp attack of measles, along with several others. Just as the convalescent stage was reached an outbreak of scarlet fever occurred, and some of the sufferers were placed in my ward, which held a score of beds. During the absence of the sister in charge I got up one day and

sat on a friend's bed while talking to him. I caught the fever, and altogether three months elapsed before my return to school; my father was sent for, and it was a narrow squeak. There were two things to which I could never accustom myself: *tisane* and *eau sucrée*; two more sickly drenches it would be difficult to discover, but the French boys, big and little, lapped them down with avidity; how I dreaded them! Nothing could have exceeded the kindness and gentleness of the Sisters of Charity, who were very different from the nurses in so many London nursing "homes" of to-day in these respects.

On my arrival at the school I attended the lessons of my class, but received no instruction in the language; the idea was that it would gradually filter into my brain, and such was the case, for in three months or so it was possible for me to follow, with a certain degree of facility, the usual course of study. Anticipating for a moment it may be mentioned that, when I went to Berlin, three years afterwards, special instruction in German was given to me before joining the school, and it took me much about the same time as it had done in France to acquire a working knowledge of the language. It would seem, therefore, that there was practically no difference in the results of the two methods.

It was not, however, necessary for me to know French in order to discover that my country was decidedly unpopular. Boys, of course, will be boys, but their methods differ in different lands; at Versailles the pinpricks were moral and not physical. I quickly learnt the meaning of the expression *Perfide Albion* which was in frequent use. Of course these children of my own age or thereabouts picked up at home what they said to me, or paraphrased it, and the principle of half a loaf being better than no bread was exemplified in the following manner: in the year 1865, a couple of years before I joined the Lycée, a French-bred colt, Gladiateur, had won the Derby. This was the first French victory, and my youthful companions were fond of impressing upon me, in consequence of it, that *Waterloo est vengé*. That great battle was always a sore point, but its disastrous result was put down to the

treachery of Grouchy, and some boys indeed professed to know the exact amount paid to him by Wellington.

Even in those days of the Second Empire—1867 to 1870—the general sentiment among the Lycéens was republican; this was, I think, due to the fact that the majority of the boys belonged to the *Bourgeoisie*, and their parents felt their prospects would be better under a Republic than under a Sovereign. Newspapers were strictly forbidden, and unfranked letters were severely censored. Although the boys loved gossiping about the glories of the Revolution, their chief interest centred on the national hero, the great Napoleon, and his amazing series of French victories. He could do no wrong from a military point of view, and any mishap or disaster was put down to treachery or incompetence on the part of his subordinates. It never occurred to my companions to reflect that, after all, he was really an Italian, but their view coincided with that of M. Thiers, the celebrated but not always accurate historian.

We were taken sometimes to the vast collection of military pictures in the palace, the most popular among them being those which depicted the country in danger and saved by the gallantry of her sons. On the base of the statue erected to commemorate the founder of the huge palace, Louis XIV, are inscribed the words: "A TOUTES LES GLOIRES DE LA FRANCE." She has many indeed on which to reflect with just pride, but her great military glory has been, I think, surpassed by her triumphs in more peaceful pursuits.

## CHAPTER II

It must be remembered that we were never, for one single instant, left alone ; the authorities, indeed, thought my parents were crazy when they said I was to travel home by myself for my first holidays at the age of twelve, and they washed their hands of all responsibility for anything that might happen to me on the way. We did our preparation for the morrow in our respective studies, of which there was one for each class. Sometimes the work would be finished rather early, leaving an interval of an hour or so before supper and bed-time. The ushers in charge were often good-natured men, and would read aloud to their classes on such occasions. This was a great treat, for it was seldom that a boy had any literature of his own to peruse, and, if he had, a volume had first to satisfy the strict scrutiny of the censor, a very important official of the Lycée. An usher was not authorized to sanction a book.

In this way we became acquainted with many French authors, and the range was a large one ; it included Corneille, Racine, Molière, Erckmann-Chatrian's delightful Napoleonic stories, and other writers, together with extracts from M. Thiers' great work, the *History of the Consulate and the Empire*. All this enlarged our vocabulary to a very considerable extent. *Robert Robert*—by some forgotten author—was a great favourite, and I always thought it was produced for my especial benefit as a Briton.

When I first joined the Lycée I knew some of Captain Marryat's novels pretty well by heart, and thought it would be both tactful and prudent not to mention naval matters in my new surroundings. My surprise was great on learning that Britannia was held in quite low repute in maritime affairs. True there had been disasters, of which Trafalgar was one, but they were all explained away by

treachery or incompetence. Usually, however, we were not in it with French seamen. *Robert Robert* was a simple privateersman, and his astounding feats in capturing heavily armed frigates and in beating off ships of the line showed the fertility of the author's brain. Of course the old legend of the *Vengeur* going down with her colours flying, and the other one of *La Garde meurt mais ne se rend pas*, were believed implicitly. These are, however, merely instances of a very general characteristic: each side claims the victory; the battles of Borodino and the Alma are cases in point. But French bravery needs no support from myths; its wonderful feats speak for themselves.

Besides the annual vacation in August and September, which I always spent in England, work was suspended for about ten or twelve days, scattered throughout the year, on the occasion of great festivals of the Church such as Easter and Whitsuntide. It happened occasionally that the Cardinal Bishop of Versailles, attended by an imposing military escort, conducted a service with great pomp in the school chapel; Napoleon III always made much of the Church for political reasons. I attended one once, and found myself in a quandary: at the termination of the proceedings the boys filed past the Bishop and kissed a little silver image which he held in his hand. I thought it would be very marked and prudish if I should remain in my seat, while, on the other hand, having been brought up in a decidedly Evangelical atmosphere, I had been taught something about the ultimate fate of idolaters.

I salved my conscience by deciding that it would be polite to do as the other boys were doing, while nursing a hope that the Almighty would sympathize with me in my dilemma, and spare me future torture. In due course the long holidays came round, and I was invited one day to take tea with some ladies of a certain age, the wives of cathedral dignitaries. I was to go alone, and did not look forward to the entertainment; my impression, as I grew older and acquired some worldly knowledge, was that these good women were desirous of finding out whether any

attempt was being made at the Lycée to proselytize me in that sink of idolatry, a Roman Catholic school.

I was, of course, on my best behaviour, and conversation languished until one of my entertainers asked me about the system of religious training in vogue. They were already aware that I was marched, together with the other English boys, to our own church on Sundays, so it occurred to me to describe the ceremonial when the Bishop came. When I mentioned how the boys kissed the silver image one of the ladies said :

“ But, of course, you did not do this ? ”

Unfortunately for me, I must have been like George Washington in those days, or else the sense of discipline was too strong. At any rate I owned up, and sensing—as the Americans say—a decided feeling of frigidity, hastened to explain that I had endeavoured to do the best thing in difficult circumstances. Up went three pairs of black-gloved hands—I can see them now—accompanied by the chorus, which might have been rehearsed : “ Oh ! you wicked little boy ! ”

The party broke up very shortly afterwards ; it had not occurred to me to say anything about the incident until I was hard pressed to make conversation, so that my people knew nothing about it until a Canoness impressed on my mother the danger to which the Church of England was being exposed at Versailles. She was, indeed, induced to write to the *Proviseur*—head master—not to permit me to attend any more Roman services. On my return to the Lycée the great man—he was really very human—sent for me and told me this ; he also remarked : “ *Tiens, je croyais qu’il n’y avait qu’un seul bon Dieu.* ”

Scraps of news filtered into the school through boys who had been taken out on Sundays, and one item was considered to be a decided spoke in Albion’s wheel. This was the opening of the Suez Canal in the year 1869 by the Empress Eugénie ; for some reason or other it was thought that the new and shorter route would weaken England’s hold on her eastern possessions ; probably the wish was father to the thought.

I always looked ahead to the holidays with undiminished



longing, counting the days towards the end of the school year. The different classes were sub-divided, when their numbers required it, into sections of equal numbers, and these would occasionally compete together. A letter of mine, written in December 1869, informed my parents that I had been eighth out of ninety-five boys in essay writing, and that this, for me, astonishing result had induced no less a personage than the head master to compliment me on my achievement.

There was a good deal of speculation among the boys in May 1870 as to the probable result of the *Plébiscite*; on the whole the hope was that the electors would vote against the Empire. I see, however, in a letter of May 17 of that year, that Napoleon III got about seven million votes in his favour, and only a million or so against him. The result was that we were given a special holiday from Saturday afternoon until the following Sunday night. Either some authorized person had to fetch a boy from the Lycée, or else the lads were taken in droves to Paris by an usher, who handed them over and awaited their return in the evening. One of the regulations, concerning day-boarders, stated: "They are forbidden to fulfil any commissions whatsoever for the boarders; any infraction of this rule will render them liable to the most severe penalties." I note also that, in one of my letters about the box of stores for Christmas, I asked for a specially good lock and key.

A curious fact, in the light of subsequent events, was that, long before there was any rumour of war with Germany in 1870, the question of the Rhine frontier was often discussed among the boys, and it is quite a mistake to suppose, as so many people do, that this problem arose for the first time after the Great War. The average French boy of fourteen or fifteen was a very shrewd politician, and, no doubt, still is, but military power and glory were the objects which he adored above all others. We were drilled regularly by a non-commissioned officer of the Imperial Guard, and a few months before the Franco-German War broke out the older boys were equipped with rifles on these occasions, and thus formed, I believe, the first school cadet corps in the world. The idea was well

suited to the French temperament : the soldiers first and last.

Prior to the struggle of 1870-71 the idea of the French boys was that their country had been unjustly despoiled after the Napoleonic wars, and the two chief factors, which kept this sentiment warm, were the strong feeling of jealousy with regard to *la perfide Albion* and resentment against Prussia. France had been led to believe that, if she remained quiet during the war with Austria in 1866, she would be given or allowed to take compensation at the expense of some other country. The hopes which had been raised did not materialize, and the feeling that their country had been made a cat's-paw—which the boys had imbibed from their elders—kept the sense of irritation alive. They were in no degree alarmed about Prussia ; it was felt that France was too strong for her, and that Germany was merely an agglomeration of States with, in the future as in the past, diverse interests.

In July 1870 rumours of trouble with the latter country began to filter through the Lycée ; the ushers did not encourage them, as political discussions were strictly banned, but one day it was announced that France had been insulted in the person of her ambassador, Benedetti, and that war was certain. Paris—that is to say France—was on fire ; but as a matter of fact his Excellency had read the German official version of Bismarck's telegram a few hours after publication in the *Cologne Gazette*, and took no exception to its terms. In the year 1867 M. de Moustier had said to Bismarck :

"The policy of your Government will bring you to Jena."

"Why not to Waterloo ?" was the prompt and prophetic reply. War was declared on July 19.

The excitement and enthusiasm among the Lycéens was, of course, intense, and, as I knew nothing whatever about the enemy except what I heard in the school, my sympathies were whole-heartedly on the side of France. The head master visited each class in turn, told us that we might give donations for the sick and wounded, and gave a general explanation of the situation. In common with

most of his compatriots he believed in a speedy and crushing victory for French arms, and said that after many years of waiting France would at last get her rightful frontier, namely, the left bank of the Rhine.

It was not known at the time that in the first week of August 1866—after Prussia had crushed Austria—Napoleon III had actually demanded that frontier up to and including Mayence, an important fortress. Bismarck had replied by saying he would have to fight for it. Judging by the acts and words of French statesmen of to-day the same hope still exists.

The estimate for the time required to march to Berlin was three weeks, but one unfortunate youth got into trouble over this; he was as good a patriot as anybody else, but had a passion for exactness. Consequently he reckoned that unforeseen delays might occur, and that three weeks was cutting it too fine. He was with difficulty rescued by the ushers from his infuriated comrades before my eyes. Three weeks was the period laid down, and the point must not be argued.

A large part of the Imperial Guard had always been stationed at Versailles, and we had often seen these magnificent troops during our route marches. More than once we had seen them *en route* for Paris to quell political disturbances. Horse, foot, and artillery were something for a boy to gloat over in their picturesque uniforms. The French army of those days was practically a professional one; conscription was only nominally in force, because any young man, drawn for service in the ranks, could purchase a substitute for a thousand francs, or forty pounds. This system prevented, of course, the building up of an adequate reserve, but the idea was that the Frenchman is temperamentally so military that he could be transformed into an efficient soldier in an extraordinarily short space of time. It must, however, be remembered that in those days musketry was almost entirely neglected; men in all armies fired a small number of rounds annually with very indifferent skill, and there the matter rested.

In 1870 the French infantry was armed with a capital

weapon, the chassepot, which had an effective range of more than double that of the German needle-gun ; it was believed that this superiority would render matters far easier for the French. They, on the other hand, had omitted to recognize the tremendous superiority of the enemy's breech-loading field artillery over their muzzle-loading guns. There was no heavier armament in the field in those days.

We boys were taken several times to see the troops entrain at Versailles for the frontier ; it struck me, accustomed as I was to the extreme smartness and rigidity of British soldiers, that the discipline was very slack, and there was a certain number of drunken men on parade. Still more interesting were the occasions when we were taken to the great camp at Satory, close to Versailles ; what intrigued us most of all were the newly invented mitrailleuses, the forerunners of the modern machine gun. Great hopes were based on this new engine of warfare ; although the range was much below that of field artillery, it was expected that the fire effect would be so devastating that the bold employment of the mitrailleuse would far more than counterbalance any deficiency in range power. Certainly at times they were cruelly effective, but they were wrapped in mystery and waterproof covers which prevented us from gratifying our curiosity ; a gunner told us their range, but my first sight of the weapon itself was three months later in Berlin, where hundreds of them were on view in Unter den Linden.

During one of our visits to the camp at Satory some of the boys entered into conversation with an absolutely magnificent man, a regimental sergeant-major of Zouaves ; he must have been well over six feet in height, was perfectly proportioned, and set off his splendid uniform to perfection. Some of my companions had heard rumours that England was about to cast in her lot with her ancient enemy, and as the sergeant-major wore our Crimean medal he was considered likely to be able to say whether there was any truth in the gratifying reports.

" Ah," he replied, "*il ne faut pas se fier aux Anglais ; je les connais lors du Crimée.*"

A tactful comrade then introduced me to him ; he was very nice and said that, individually, we had several good points, but as a nation Albion was perfidious.

The safety of the capital was uppermost in everybody's mind ; a general argument was that, assuming the Germans could win in the field, they must be beaten in the end, because a million men at least would be necessary in order to invest Paris ; the Germans could not dispose of such a huge force, therefore Paris could never be taken.

We had heard that great things were expected from a new and irregular force, the *francs-tireurs* ; they would not be dressed in uniform, might indeed wear petticoats, and would conceal arms underneath their garments. By creeping up to unsuspecting enemy soldiers it was thought that this procedure would get so much on the Germans' nerves that they would become jumpy and more unreliable than ever. The Germans were forced naturally to adopt severe measures against the gentry in question, and abused us most heartily during the Boer War for having been obliged to follow their example.

Sniping by regular soldiers was also indulged in, but the practice soon fell into disuse as it did not have the wished-for results ; some generals encouraged it during the Great War, the consequence being that a few men were killed or maimed on either side.

The few remaining days before the holidays passed quickly enough. The end of the school year had always been celebrated by an official prize-giving ceremony carried out with considerable pomp. In 1870, however, owing to the outbreak of war, the proceedings were cut down to a minimum, but the prizes, engrossed with the imperial arms, were issued as usual. A silver medal for each class was one of the most coveted distinctions and was given for a kind of general excellence, if I may be permitted to say so ! There was a horrid prig in my class who afterwards cut something of a figure under the Republic ; like many other prigs, however, he had a knack of being very successful where prizes were concerned, and carried off numbers of them year after year. The medal had nevertheless always eluded his grasp, and

this time he had set out with the fixed determination to win it. As he was very anti-British I was delighted to beat him by six points—a cruel blow.

I was also lucky enough to pick up the first prize for recitation : this test consisted in learning by heart, during the year, a long piece of literature, in this case Racine's *Esther*, and at the examination one was told to recite some portion selected by the examiner at haphazard ; he gave the two first words, and I got through my piece without a mistake. Another prize or two also came my way, and I merely mention the fact because they are, naturally, among my treasured possessions, for, just one month later, the Emperor and his great army surrendered as prisoners of war.

Excitement rose to fever heat with the news of the affair at Saarbrück on August 2. This was the only occasion during my three years at Versailles that I handled a newspaper in the Lycée ; our usher produced one which magnified the skirmish into a great victory. We did not know then that three French army corps had been opposed by a dozen companies and six guns, which put up a stout resistance before withdrawing—no doubt the journalist was equally ignorant of the facts. Enthusiasm was concentrated on the victory, the Baptism of Fire of the ill-fated Prince Imperial exciting little attention, but, as already stated, the boys were mostly republican in sentiment.

The only signs of war which I saw during my journey home from Versailles were the newly-raised *gardes mobiles*, who looked quite smart but were, of course, untrained. In striking contrast with the pestilential modern system of passports in peace time was the complete liberty of the individual. None of my fellow-passengers were questioned on proceeding from the train to the boat, and nobody would have thought that on the same day, the fourth of August, a battle was being fought at Weissenburg, the first of a long series of stupendous German victories.

Although the majority of the French are stout republicans they are, nevertheless, extremely conservative as a nation. Authority in France to-day is almost as powerful

as it was before the Revolution of 1789. In view of modern trade and business developments it sounds extraordinary, but is nevertheless true, that there is to-day no Bankers' Clearing House for cheques in Paris, which, of course, causes much avoidable delay. If you asked a French man of affairs for the reason he would tell you : "*Ce n'est pas dans nos mœurs.*"

After the Great War it was suggested in some quarters that the Lycées should be conducted more on British lines, and the principal head masters met in conference in Paris to discuss the matter. The proceedings were, however, of brief duration, for one of them declared that to give boys of any age any measure of freedom and responsibility would be destructive of their morality, as they might then roam about a town, possibly in plain clothes and unattended. The project was quickly vetoed unanimously.

Many of those parents who belong to the higher strata of French society will not send their sons as boarders to a Lycée if they can help it ; they are naturally afraid of bad moral influences and the prison-like life. A boy of eighteen, for instance, would be brought and handed over to the porter at the gate by a nurse. Philarète Chasles wrote some interesting Memoirs in which he describes George Sand's dismay on visiting her son in a Lycée, and he echoes her protest against "these dismal jails."

The Lycée system is a thoroughly bad one from an English point of view ; it inevitably leads to sneaking and espionage as well as to constant attempts to outwit the authorities ; possibly it sharpens the wits. No boy, whatever his age and behaviour, is ever, in any circumstances, to be trusted to act honourably on his own initiative. This is the key-note of the French system of bringing up youth, and it is wonderful how the French rise superior to it. The life was damnable ; the ceaseless espionage, the entire loss of any personal liberty, the cheerless surroundings, the coarseness of some of the ushers, were altogether alien to an English schoolboy.

I visited my old school twenty years after the Franco-German War and found one acquaintance of former days.

This was an usher in the *petit collège*; he was a kind-hearted man in my time, and always wore a curiously shaped tall hat with a straight brim; we had often wondered how old it was, for the nap had almost disappeared. I recognized the hat before the owner; it was in exactly its former condition. He was engaged in his usual task of supervising a string of children marching round and round at defaulter's drill, a dreary grind after dinner which I had endured many times. We had a long conversation, and were glad to meet again, and he told me some of his experiences during the war, in which he had fought like the gallant Frenchman he was, and had been wounded, but recovered completely. It was rather pathetic: no prospects, nothing but ceaseless monotony until too old for work.

My wife accompanied me thither again in 1926, nearly sixty years after my first incarceration; nothing had been altered, and she, who is much younger than myself, shuddered as she took in the situation.

I made many nice friends among my schoolfellows while accumulating a store of varied experiences, and the Lycée method is probably the one best adapted to the Latin character, which views things from a different angle to ours—a fact too often overlooked by politicians.



### CHAPTER III

SHORTLY after my return to England in August 1870 it became apparent that the Lycée could see me no more, for it had been transformed into a military hospital. Being nearly fifteen, and, therefore, too old to be entered at an English public school, it was decided to make me change sides and join the conquerors. On the outbreak of war my sympathies had been violently anti-German, nor is this surprising. Welsh on my father's side and Irish on my mother's, there was a strong vein of sentiment in my composition which long years have failed to eradicate entirely, in spite of my efforts to become a cynic. Moreover, the true situation was absolutely unknown to me, and besides I was not unpopular among my comrades; indeed the rumour that England was about to support France gave me a fictitious standing at the moment. Being asked by my parents whether I had any suggestion to make about my future education, a desire—whose seed had been sown in France—to learn something more about other countries, prompted me to propose Germany. This wish was strengthened by a natural curiosity to see how the victors bore themselves after the crushing defeats they had already inflicted upon the enemy in the field. My surmise was that they would be extremely arrogant, and perhaps unpleasant towards a foreigner; but my inquisitiveness had been aroused.

I have always been heartily glad that I spent rather more than two years at school in Berlin, from October 1870 until the end of December 1872. There was no more difficulty, in those days, in getting into Germany than there had been in quitting France while the two countries were at death-grips. I travelled alone from Hull to Hamburg, and although I had been by way of learning

German for a couple of years at Versailles, my practical attainments in that language were *nil*. There were about half a dozen passengers on board the small steamer, and I inquired from one of them, a commercial Englishman, whether he knew the tongue. He said he did, so I inquired the German for "railway," meaning to go straight through to Berlin on arrival at the quay. He replied at once *rilewoggen*, but I soon discovered that his knowledge was no greater than my own !

It made no difference, however, as the pilot landed us twice on sandbanks, and we arrived at Hamburg so late at night that I had to go to an hotel. There was a large French cruiser off Heligoland, which passed quite close but took no notice of us ; she could not go up the Elbe, and the Germans had no warship large enough to send out. The hotel porter told my cabman, early on the morning following my arrival, to take me to the station, where I just asked for Berlin. The train reached the capital in the afternoon, and I had remembered to learn the address of my new quarters where my arrival was, of course, expected, and I felt at home at once.

The German system is the absolute antithesis of the French one : boys do not live in the great schools, but merely attend the classes, and dwell either with their parents or in the family of one of the professors. The classical school—*gymnasium*, as it is called—selected for me through the kind intervention of the celebrated professors von Helmholtz and von Schellbach, was the leading one in Berlin, the *Friedrich-Wilhelm*. Schellbach was the chief mathematical professor there, and arrangements had been made for me to board with Professor Boehm, a great classical scholar. The head master, a very gentle but extremely able man, was a brother of the celebrated historian, Leopold von Ranke, and wrote the most illegible handwriting I have ever seen.

Dr. Boehm was married to a most kindly wife, and when I arrived his three sons—all at the same school—and his grown-up daughter comprised the family party. I was just fifteen and the youngest, there being no other boarder at the time. All was in striking contrast with Versailles.

The Boehms' apartment formed part of the school buildings, which were situated in the Friedrich Strasse, the Oxford Street of Berlin, and my large room, on the ground-floor, looked directly on to the street, a point of vantage immensely appreciated, for there was much to see.

My professor had three other grown-up sons: the eldest, Willy, had served in the ranks during the wars of 1864 and 1866; when the Franco-German one broke out he was well established as a doctor of philosophy, and was called up in December 1870, when man-power was beginning to run rather low, but was rejected on medical grounds. The second son, Otto, had served against Austria in 1866; he was a senior clerk in a large bank and was called up in July 1870, serving as a regimental sergeant-major. He was severely wounded twice, at Gravelotte and before Paris, and was invalided home just before the fall of the capital. The third son, Leopold, had not reached the military age for volunteers at the time of the declaration of war, but was allowed, nevertheless, to join a medical unit; he had always intended to be a surgeon.

Every German of education had known quite well that French policy had always been opposed to a united Germany, and the fate in store, had France been victorious, was fully appreciated. Nevertheless, I never heard any expressions of hatred against the enemy, even among schoolboys, although every one of them had or had had relatives in the field. They were very quiet and peaceful, whereas I had expected a natural arrogance after the stupendous successes of their country.

It was the same thing as regards England; she was not more popular in the Fatherland than she had been in France. There were various reasons for this dislike: they may be briefly summed up in the statement that she had been too fond of playing the part of elder sister; the Prussians, especially, resented being patronized when they were still weak, and as their country grew in strength with amazing rapidity they detected signs of endeavours to curb this increasing power. The more or less successful attempts of British traders to smuggle contraband of war

into France during the campaign was another factor against us. Never once, however, was there the smallest thing said or done to me in Germany which could be construed even into unkindness.

Being entirely ignorant of the language on my arrival I had, of course, first of all, to learn it sufficiently well to enable me to take my place in class, and I was the only foreigner in the *Gymnasium*, with the exception of a Russian Pole, older than myself, in one of the higher forms. At first my sole means of communication with the professor's family was through one of his sons, who knew a little French, but, thrown as I was upon my own resources, the ordinary daily conversation soon began, as it were, to filter into my brain, in addition to which I received instruction regularly in the language. I still have the most vivid recollection of the kindness shown to me on all hands in Germany by comrades, professors, and friends.

The school buildings themselves were old and antiquated, but they served their purpose well enough. As time went on an entirely new Berlin arose; land increased enormously in value, and when I went to Berlin thirty years afterwards as military attaché the Friedrich-Wilhelm's *Gymnasium* of my day had been pulled down and a huge beer palace erected in its place; the school itself was rebuilt on a new site in a neighbouring street.

It had two sides: one classical, and the other modern; they were quite distinct even in location, and the latter was known as the *Real Schule*, and not as *Gymnasium*; it was intended for those boys who were to take up a commercial career.

Before I was sent to France, in 1867, at the age of eleven, I had begun to study Latin, Greek, and Euclid; but my stupidity had often got me into trouble. At Versailles the grounding was much more thorough than in this country, but the teaching in Berlin was far and away the best of all; of course I was a little older when I went there, but somehow the professors—who, as in France, had nothing to do with the boys out of school hours—had a knack of making all the subjects really interesting; I became quite fond of classical authors, while mathematics,

instead of disheartening me, became a subject of great attraction.

The cost of education in Berlin was higher than at Versailles ; if I had returned to the Lycée my total annual costs would have amounted to just over forty pounds, whereas, in Germany, they were sixty pounds, exclusive of books, paper, pens, and so forth. But the extra cost was certainly well worth the money. In the first place, my life with the Teutons was very happy from the outset ; there was ample liberty, no espionage, and the food was both excellent and very appetizing. School books were a very small item, and I was glad to get back to blotting-paper after the sand used in France.

Professor Zumpt's well-known Latin Grammar cost three shillings in the original, while its English translation cost fifteen, and everything else was in proportion. Instead of boys having a small library of, say, mathematical works, the entire syllabus, from elementary algebra up to and including the calculus, was comprised in one thin volume compiled by Professor von Schellbach, and in very general use elsewhere. The system was that the professors explained and developed the principles of the small textbook, and this plan certainly made the subjects far more interesting.

The classes were slightly larger than at Versailles, and the numbering in each case was downwards ; at Berlin the highest form was the Upper First, then Lower First, Upper Second, Lower Second, and so on. At Easter, 1871, I was placed in the Lower Third, and twelve months later in Upper Third ; but my leaving certificate in December 1872, described me as qualified for Lower Second. The number of boys in a class was about forty-five. There was no corporal punishment and I never heard of any penalty greater than being kept in for an hour or so being inflicted, whereas at Versailles punishments were often flung about at random.

The system at the Lycée was rigidly military, whereas at the Gymnasium it was quite the reverse, the nearest approach to it being the chorus practice on Saturdays, when religious and military singing was taught for an

hour or so ; one of the most popular songs was the " Blücher Hussars."

The average German schoolboy could not have been very brilliant, for I rose to be seventh in my form during my second year without making any particular effort.

As in France, so in Germany, games in our sense of the word were unknown ; but gymnastics were very highly developed, and as at the Lycée obligatory, the general level of excellence being much about the same in both countries. There was a feature about the actual education in Berlin which, to my mind, was a great improvement on the French system : the teaching of the professors was all done, with some very rare exceptions, in the forenoon ; work commenced about seven o'clock, with an interval for early breakfast, and was finished by one or two at the latest. At Versailles the classes were carried on both in the morning and in the afternoon. This did not matter to us boarders, because we were always imprisoned behind barriers, unless somebody took us out on Sundays or holidays ; in Germany, on the other hand, every boy was free, as regards the school authorities, to go and come as he wished out of school hours.

I used to enjoy rambling about the old Berlin of more than half a century ago. It was a relatively small, old-fashioned city with pleasant surroundings, and being fond of pulling an oar, I enjoyed punting and rowing on the lake in the Thiergarten. In winter there was excellent skating, permissible if the ice was several inches thick, and sleighing. The Opera was a great attraction ; for the trifling sum of three shillings one could purchase a stall and hear great singers like Frau von Mallinger and Frau von Lucca. Altogether life at the Friedrich-Wilhelm's Gymnasium was very enjoyable and healthy.

At Versailles the preparatory work for the morrow was, as I have already stated, done in the evenings, before supper, under the supervision of the ushers, to whom we reported when it was finished ; silence had to be maintained until the evening meal, and an eye was kept upon us to see that we were not skimping our work. In Germany

each boy did his preparation whenever it suited him to do it, and there was a very good reason for this : in Germany the law of conscription was rigidly enforced, and no substitutes were permitted.

A certain number of young men would reach the military age every year ; the peace strength of the army was fixed by law—in those days it was 1 per cent. of the population—and these youths drew lots to make up the annual quota required to fill the ranks, and replace those who had finished their three years of duty, and were about to pass into the reserve. A proportion of these young men would not, therefore, be wanted ; but the fact of somebody being a great nobleman, or the son of one, could not prevent him from being drawn for service. There was, however, a loophole—for one-year volunteers—devised not for purposes of favouritism but partly in order to interfere as little as possible with the start of young men in life, who had received a higher education, and partly in order to pass these educated youths quickly through the ranks so that they might qualify themselves for positions, on mobilization, as non-commissioned officers or as officers on the reserve list, available in time of war. Furthermore, any young gentleman who desired to become an officer in the regular army was obliged to serve for some months in the ranks of the regiment which he desired to join. If he passed the necessary examinations, which included a nine-months' course at a War School, it then rested with the officers of the regiment to decide whether they would accept him. Each Cadet Corps had a small class of specially qualified youngsters who became commissioned officers at once.

The mere fact, however, that a boy had been to one of the secondary schools was not in itself sufficient to ensure the privilege of serving—at his own expense—one year instead of three ; to obtain this advantage he had to get a passing-out certificate at Easter, from the head master, that he had completed, in a perfectly satisfactory manner, the school curriculum ; the test was a very real one indeed, so that the German boy knew from the beginning what he had to do.

No prizes were given in German schools to the more brilliant boys; instead, at Easter, the end of the school year, when the time came for promotion into the next higher class, every boy was given a certificate which described his general qualifications; these certificates were drawn up by the professors in consultation and were of three categories, first, second, and third, in order of merit. The third, or lowest, represented quite a good educational level, and qualified the holder for service as a one-year volunteer. The highest class of certificate was very rarely given, so my gratification can be imagined when one was handed to me during my second year; some points must have been stretched in my favour.

There was therefore no need to supervise our preparation; nobody wanted to run the risk of serving three years in the ranks when he could escape with one. As my room looked out on the street, I often saw soldiers, but was more especially attracted by the horse and field artillery; its deeds during the Franco-German War were in everybody's mouth, and my ambition was fired to become a British artilleryman myself.

Of all the military displays which I saw at Berlin the entry of the victorious troops into the capital, in the summer of 1871, was the sight which impressed me most. Everything was propitious for the great event; it was a perfect summer's day, and von Moltke was, of course, the hero of the occasion. Displays and ceremonial did not usually attract much attention in Berlin; the chief reason was, no doubt, the fact that everybody had work to do which came first. For the day of the triumphal entry, however, a general holiday was proclaimed, and a vast concourse of people filled the numerous stands which had been erected and the streets along which the procession was to pass.

The Germans are not much given to cheering, and the reception of the troops might have been considered somewhat lukewarm in this country, but the one accorded to the famous strategist was truly magnificent; he was regarded as the embodiment of the army. In the evening the populace walked quietly about the capital, admiring



the decorations and trophies, or else betook themselves to the beer-gardens.

I had arrived in Berlin at a time when the result of the war was no longer in doubt, but events in the field of unusual interest were still celebrated by spontaneous illuminations. The fall of Fort Mont Valérien outside Paris was an instance; when the special bulletin announcing this was scattered broadcast in the streets, the inhabitants placed rows of lighted candles in their windows, and the effect was decidedly pleasing; the plan was likewise an economical one, a matter of importance, as the Germans were then poor. Thrift was indeed too rigidly practised, and anybody accustomed, as I had been, to horses all my life could not fail to be struck by the under-feeding of the German steeds; all, even those belonging to well-to-do people, showed their ribs, with the exception of the court animals and those which belonged to the famous, and subsequently bankrupt, De Strousberg.

An era of great, indeed wild speculation, set in after the Franco-German War; the financiers floated innumerable companies whose shares they unloaded for quite a long time on the public, with usually disastrous results to the latter. In fact, among the more sensible people, or those who had no money to risk, it was a common joke to advise a simpleton to take shares in a company. One noted financier, whose rise was meteoric, was said to have made his first *coup* by placing all he owned in the world, a silver groschen piece, worth about 2*d.*, on a railway line, when a passing train flattened it and increased its size, thus enabling the possessor to pass it off for double its real value. The new mark coinage was not yet in general use, and one came across all kinds of queer-looking tokens.

There was a grand parade of the garrison on the occasion of the meeting of the three Emperors of Austria, Germany, and Russia. This took place at the Tempelhofer Feld on August 31, 1872, but the notice taken of this function by the public was not very great; in conversation with others, however, it was obvious that they sensed the importance of the gathering. Fortunately for me, the interval between two classes enabled me to see the three

monarchs driving past my window to the parade ground.

Some of my schoolmates at Berlin, like others at Versailles, filled high positions in the public service in later years, and those of them whom I met when I was military attaché in Germany about thirty years afterwards, were as pleasant to me personally as formerly, although the Boer War coincided with my stay, and had excited intense feeling against this country, as will be seen further on in these pages.

As the time passed I no longer had my big room to myself; sometimes one, sometimes two, other boarders shared it with me. As Professor Boehm's flat was very tightly packed indeed, this room was also used by one of his sons for the purpose of carrying out experiments in chemistry and physics; these were most interesting, and the not infrequent explosions which occurred made us rigid with excitement.

The long holidays only lasted one month, as against two at Versailles, and began earlier; on the other hand, we got several days at Easter, and a fortnight at Michaelmas, besides the Emperor-King's birthday on March 22. I only returned home in the summer, but I was not left to find my own distractions during the shorter holidays: all the school members of our party were taken by the professor on walking tours; we would go by train to some place a couple of hours or so distant from the capital, and then start on our feet with a very modest kit. During my first outing of the kind we all got drenched with rain, during a violent thunderstorm, while we still had some miles to go before reaching the village inn, where we were to spend the night. We were travelling light and had no change of clothing, but the professor told us that if we let our garments dry on us before taking them off no colds would result—a piece of information which I have verified in after-life on several occasions. These tours were very pleasant and cheerful, and are the only walks that I have ever really enjoyed.

During the year 1872 the professor's eldest son, the doctor of philosophy, Willie Boehm, was married. I

was invited, as being so to say a member of the family, and the ceremony took place in a village not far from Halle. I stayed with the Lutheran pastor, whose house was in the graveyard ; the church was a very old wooden building, and the brother of the bride, a professional man, gave a touch of colour to the proceedings by wearing his uniform as an officer of the Landwehr. We spent three very happy days there, and there was a great feast on the evening of the wedding, which was attended by the bride and bridegroom. There is, or was, a custom in Germany—I do not know its origin—that, during the meal, somebody other than the bridegroom should attempt to remove one of the garters from the bride's knee ; I was much alarmed because I had been told that I was to be the one to try the experiment, but fortunately other counsels prevailed. The gentleman selected for the purpose crawled underneath the large dining-table and was decidedly worsted in the encounter ; he emerged without the garter, whereas his face was rather badly marked, the lady being permitted by the rules of the game to use her limbs as a means of defence.

It was in Germany that I had my first experience of third-class travel on railways ; accommodation of this description was not then provided on fast trains, so that our journey to and from the wedding was considerably prolonged. There were no side-windows in the carriages and the seats were bare boards, but the cost was very small, and cheaper still, of course, in the fourth-class compartments, which were merely boxes with a few movable benches. Certainly one way of getting to know the people of a country is to travel as the great majority of them do.

A kind old lady in England decided to present me with a gold watch of the value of twenty-five pounds. Now Berlin has always been a great place for watches, and I prowled about the best shops, wearying the proprietors—although they never hinted as much—with my importunities for information. I was aware that a good watch was a costly affair in England, and my astonishment was great on finding that prices were so ridiculously low in Germany. I proposed, therefore, to buy in the cheapest

market and purchase something else with the balance. A letter of mine, written in February 1872, goes into detail about prices and quality, and I had fixed upon the Emperor's own watchmaker. It was to be a keyless hunter, and the cost fifteen pounds. Nobody in Germany thought even then of buying any but keyless watches.

My plans were, however, frustrated ; I was told that my family had always had their watches from a very celebrated London firm which was to supply mine. Certainly it was very highly finished outside, but was of the old-fashioned type, and I usually forgot the key when starting on a journey. The thing would keep quite good time, provided I did not ride to hounds, when it became utterly unreliable. It cost many good pounds in repairs, and was discarded altogether when I got my commission ; I eventually sold it for the value of the gold, which was just about four pounds. The firm had, of course, been trading on its reputation, and assembled their wares from cheap Swiss parts. My grandfather's watch, by the same makers, is still most reliable, although much more than a hundred years old ; but the escapement had to be replaced once on account of wear and tear.

Generally speaking, prices were very low in Germany in my schooldays as compared with those in England, and the things were very good. When, therefore, German trade with foreign countries assumed ever-growing dimensions, the argument was raised that they were cheap and nasty ; the fact was that our traders were often too old-fashioned in their methods, and this is frequently the case to-day.

Bureaucracy reigned in Germany, as in France, but seemed to be, in my young days, less irksome in the former country ; it was more paternal ; for instance, the first time that I went to the swimming-baths I had to pass a test in shallow water before being allowed to get out of my depth. In later years police regulations were, I suppose, more stringent : my young brother-in-law was stopped and summarily fined by a constable for riding his bicycle across Unter den Linden. The ambassador's dog, taking the air with the hall porter of the embassy,

on his own doorstep, was literally netted by an official dog-catcher, and quite a serious diplomatic controversy took place before the poor animal was released alive. The bureaucratic argument was that extra-territoriality extended only to human beings under the orders of his Excellency, and that, as animals were not mentioned in its definitions, a dog which defied the law must be tried and convicted by the Prussian authorities.

My father had consented to my trying to enter the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich in order to become an artillery officer. It was a decided shock to learn that the examination, instead of being a qualifying one as in Germany, was severely competitive, perhaps a couple of hundred candidates for about forty vacancies. As the maximum age for admission was eighteen, it was necessary for me to quit Berlin in December 1872, in order to study the British system and prepare myself for the ordeal. A copy of the syllabus had reached me some time previously and subject to one exception, a very important one, my chance seemed a fair one; English history, literature, French and German, carried a big proportion of marks, but Euclid was a stout obstacle. The German system of teaching geometry was very simple and attractive, but the Civil Service Commissioners required that ancient geometrician's method of learning the science, and my recollections of it were painful in more senses than one, so I read him over and over again until I was word perfect. My age would prevent me from competing twice.

It was with very real regret that I said good-bye to my kind friends and instructors in Germany; my time with them had been a very happy as well as an interesting one. I little thought that my youthful experiences were destined to be of so much value to me in later years, or that the vague and passive dislike of England should develop to such an extent as to crystallize the entire German official world into one gargantuan lump of absolutely unqualified Hate.

END OF PROLOGUE

## **ACT I**



## CHAPTER IV

WHEN I was invalided home on six months' sick leave in March 1900 from South Africa it never entered my head that the post of military attaché at Berlin would fall into my hands before half that period should have expired. After about a month in England the War Office informed me, in reply to my application for passage back to the Cape, that the Boer War was believed to be nearing its conclusion, and that there was no object in my returning thither. It was proposed instead that I should be appointed military attaché in Germany in the place of Colonel (afterwards General Sir James) Grierson, who had recently gone to Africa. The appointment was to be a temporary one until he came back to Europe, when I should return to my pre-war post in the War Office.

The prospect was a most alluring one in the circumstances; something might indeed turn up which would result in my new appointment being made permanent. Matters were accordingly put in train, but a delay of some weeks occurred owing to the papers in the case having been mislaid in a War Office blotter. The only result of this was that I missed the coming-of-age festivities in honour of the Crown Prince's eighteenth birthday.

The Prince of Wales (King Edward) had told me to write to him from time to time if there should be anything likely to interest him, and in reply to one of my epistles the late Sir Francis (afterwards Lord) Knollys sent me, on December 28, 1899, a very interesting account of the recent visits of the German Emperor and Empress to Windsor and Sandringham. He said they were "the greatest possible success. The Emperor was much pleased with both of his visits, and was most civil to everybody, and I don't believe there was a single drawback." The



letter goes on to say that the admirable behaviour of the country under the shocks of Colenso, Magersfontein, and Stormberg "has excited the admiration of many of our foreign critics, and to such an extent that lately they have been abusing us in a lesser degree."

Before starting for Berlin I had some interviews with the Prince of Wales, and one of these occasions was the morning of the Derby, which was won by Diamond Jubilee, the triple-crown hero. Some will remember that he was a very temperamental colt; jockeys could not manage him, but he was very fond of his stable-lad, Herbert Jones, who was to have the mount. We were talking about the horse, and the Prince said: "If only he keeps his temper I don't see what can beat us, but, unfortunately, it does not improve with age."

I was staying at my father-in-law's in the country at the time, and on my return there consulted with my wife as to the maximum sum we could scrape together to back the colt for the great event. We thought he was sure to be an odds-on chance. The butler was a regular supporter of the book-making fraternity, whose members were his annuitants, and I entrusted him with our commission, as he was going into the town a few miles distant, immediately after luncheon in order to operate.

He was obviously disconcerted with what I told him; he had already pinned his faith on some other horse, but I strongly advised him to back the Prince's colt as well, in view of the information given by the royal owner. In the evening my brother-in-law returned from Epsom, told us that Diamond Jubilee had won, starting at 6 to 4 against, so we felt we were in clover. The butler did not appear until shortly afterwards; he cleared away the tea-things but did not mention the Derby, so I asked him whether he had received our winnings, a good many pounds. He replied that all the bookmakers had been full against the colt and that we had not been on!

"Well, then," I said, "give me back my cheque."

"I can't do that, sir, because I cashed it so as to have the money ready."

A horrid blow. What had happened was, no doubt,

that my friend, disturbed by my information, had put our money on the winner for himself. If Diamond Jubilee should be beaten, no questions would be asked; if he should win, then the butler was on, and we were off! He certainly belied the nickname, *Tête de Mouton*, which my father-in-law had bestowed upon him. He had once overheard the expression and told one of the other servants that he did not know what it meant; he believed it to be French and was quite sure it was something rude! No more tips, Turf or other, came to *Muttonhead* from me, but I expect he was a good winner on balance.

Reverting for a moment to the Prince of Wales's remark about Diamond Jubilee's temper not improving with age, an instance may be given of my capacity for saying the wrong thing, or one which could very naturally be misinterpreted. A short time before this particular Derby his Royal Highness had sent me a telegram to do something for him. Instead of acknowledging his message to him in the same manner, as I should have done, I only wrote a letter. As it was a matter of some urgency and a prompt reply had not been received, the equerry in waiting sent another telegram inquiring whether the first one had reached me, whereupon I did the proper thing, but the Prince was very naturally annoyed with me at the time; a mutual friend told me he was "furious."

On the occasion of the Derby of 1900 I had commenced by taking the opportunity of repeating my apologies, and said that it was incomprehensible to me how I could have been such a fool as not to have telegraphed. His Royal Highness was very kind about the affair, and replied that no doubt a similar lapse would not occur again, but when he afterwards spoke about his colt's temper not improving with age, I thoughtlessly and apropos of nothing at all, remarked: "No, sir, like that of some other people!" The instant the words were out of my mouth I realised how they were liable to misconstruction, and the same thought must have occurred to the Prince, who, thinking of my former wiggling, looked very hard for a moment at me who was sitting nearly facing the window of his study in Marlborough House; but he was

as quickly satisfied that the idea of being impertinent had never entered my head ; otherwise I should have been very properly done for.

As this is a volume of reminiscences, a story of the Prince of Wales's (King Edward's) personal courage may be mentioned. He received me shortly after the would-be assassin, Sipido, had attempted his life at Brussels, and told me the whole affair. The train was standing at the platform and his Royal Highness was reading a newspaper, when he happened to look up and saw the criminal in the act of levelling his pistol ; the shot followed immediately and the plate glass of the saloon carriage was smashed, but the Prince fortunately escaped unhurt.

"Sir," I said, "I should have crawled under the table."

He smiled as he replied : "Oh no, I couldn't do that."

Surely this was a supreme and triumphant test of nerve.

It is time to get on to Berlin after these digressions. On taking leave of the Prince just before starting for my post, he showed again how he was always devising some means of helping others. He inquired whether I would like him to give me a personal letter of introduction to his nephew ! When the Kaiser paid his visit to Russia in 1897 I had been presented to him, but this was, of course, a mere formality and we had never really met. All that was known to me was that he did not object to my nomination to Berlin ; he did not invariably accept a proposed military attaché. But my position was certain to be a very difficult one in the sense of succeeding two such gifted men as General Sir Leopold Swaine and Colonel Grierson.

The former had served two terms, extending over many years, in Germany ; he had been appointed on the second occasion because William II had specially asked that he should replace another officer whom he did not care about, and Swaine was in fact an old friend of his Majesty's. Grierson had been, for a long time before he succeeded Swaine with the Emperor's approval, on the most cordial terms with the Great General Staff in Berlin, and was also the greatest living authority on the German Army ;

his knowledge of it was amazing, as some of its officers themselves had told me.

A letter of introduction from the heir to the throne was bound in any event to be of very great assistance in making my start at such a time. We were loathed by Germans generally, firstly because we had declared war against a tiny population of simple-minded farmers, who did not care for gold, and who hated the passions to which it gives rise ; secondly, the popular belief, fostered by the German Press, was that our troops, officers and men alike, were acting inhumanly towards a chivalrous enemy. I knew all this from foreign newspapers of all shades of opinion ; it does not take long to skim through them, and they are instructive.

I called at Marlborough House for the royal letter on the morning of my departure from London, and orders were then given to me that I was to be sure and put on my " best clothes and present it in person." My party, which included my wife, our young son, and his nurse, arrived in Berlin on Sunday forenoon, June 8 ; Sir Frank Lascelles, the ambassador, had most thoughtfully sent his carriage to meet us, together with an invitation to dinner on that evening, while Miss Lascelles, now Lady Spring Rice, had also placed some lovely lilies and roses in our sitting-room at the hotel. Lady Lascelles unfortunately had died about three years previously.

My arrival coincided with a visit which the late Sir Arthur Sullivan, the eminent composer, was paying to the Prussian capital, where high society generally was anxious to see his masterpiece, *The Mikado*. A rather self-satisfied and pert young woman, a diplomatist's wife, sat next to Sir Arthur at a dinner-party, and had been unable to procure seats for the performance. After she had deplored the fact, Sir Arthur said he greatly appreciated the interest she took in his work, and expressed his regret that every ticket had been sold. Thereupon the lady, who was a recent arrival, replied :

" Oh, I don't care a bit about the play ; I only wanted to see the audience ! "

Sir Arthur was a mine of good stories, and this one

added to his list. It was very sad to hear of his death only a short time later.

On reporting myself to the ambassador before dinner on the day of my arrival I told him about my letter of introduction ; he greatly appreciated the Prince of Wales's generous act and immediately informed the authorities. Various matters occupied my time all the Sunday until bedtime, so that our trunks had not been unpacked. Just after five o'clock on the Monday morning a messenger arrived with a telegram. It informed me that the Emperor would receive me at nine at the New Palace (it is really quite old) at Potsdam, where the Court was in residence.

This exceedingly prompt reply to a communication which had passed through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the ordinary course, and on a Sunday, was in the sharpest contrast with the extraordinary delay which occurred eighteen months later when a most important letter, written by King Edward, and requiring an instant answer, unaccountably disappeared. The circumstances will be related in Chapter XII.

Time was short on this occasion, and to have been late would have been a very bad beginning ; perhaps the Kaiser wished to test my promptitude. I arrived a few moments before the appointed hour, and was received almost immediately by his Majesty, to whom I handed the Prince of Wales's letter after first saluting him. We were in the grounds of the palace, and he thrust it into the fingers of his left hand before giving me a vigorous handshake ; he had also an extraordinarily piercing glance which seemed to go right through you, like that of the Empress Dowager of China, who died in 1908.

The matter of his iron grip is mentioned because it was notorious, as was also his occasional slap on the back if he was pleased. One has often heard his ministers and generals trembled when they had reason to believe that he was dissatisfied with them, but some of them used to be almost equally alarmed if he happened to be in a very good temper and in high spirits ; often, therefore, escape from suffering was impossible, the only difference being

that it might be either mental or physical according to the circumstances of the case.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs in my time, and afterwards until his death, which was due to overwork, was Baron Oswald von Richthofen. The celebrated airman of the Great War was a member of the same family, and the Minister was a connexion of my wife's. He was a very upright and charming gentleman, always cheerful in spite of the incessant strain of his work ; the Emperor, an early riser, was in the habit of paying very matutinal visits to him, and occasionally to the ambassador. Sir Frank Lascelles used to sit up late and rise late, but this did not trouble the Kaiser, who would sit on his Excellency's bed and discuss high politics with him. Richt-hofen met my wife one morning and exclaimed :

" Oh, my dear, my shoulder is black and blue ; Majesty has been to see me and was in high good humour ! "

The Kaiser, it appeared, had punctuated one of his remarks by giving his minister a terrific slap on the back, followed by a very hearty pinch ; yet von Richthofen had been strong and active. The imperial grip given to me at Potsdam must have been up to sample ; the Emperor's hand was large, and it struck me at the time that he was not aware of his own physical strength, but I was tough.

The Emperor's left hand had unfortunately suffered malformation at birth, and could only be used for purposes requiring no effort. His horses were in consequence specially trained, and he used a combined knife and fork at meals, manipulating it with the right hand, but nobody would have noticed this.

After reading his uncle's letter we conversed for some time, although a parade was awaiting him. He was evidently much pleased with the Prince of Wales's act, and let me know that my practically immediate reception was due to it. In reporting this to his Royal Highness I also wrote : " The Emperor spoke a good deal about the war, with the main facts of which he is remarkably well acquainted, and his Majesty told me we have three really good generals, French, Baden-Powell, and Sir George White. His admiration for the last-named's defence of

Ladysmith is very great. Sir Frank Lascelles was delighted at my good fortune in bringing a letter from your Royal Highness, which led to such satisfactory results. The Russian military attaché here may be said to be somewhat of an Anglophobe, but he is an old friend, and when he unexpectedly saw me the other day he warmly embraced me, which gave me quite a *cachet* with my military colleagues!" I am sorry, but cannot think of an English synonym for this French word; I tried hard.

At this, my first interview with William II, he went into the subject of Army Administration and said exactly what the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, had told me only a short time previously, namely that Finance should manage finance and leave military matters to the Military Authority, but it depends on who this authority is. Immediately after the Emperor dismissed me I ran into an old school-fellow of my Berlin days at the Friedrich-Wilhelm's Gymnasium, von Jacobi by name; he was now a personal aide-de-camp of his Sovereign, and although decidedly Anglophobe a very nice comrade in other respects. Colonel (afterwards General Sir Beauchamp) Walker was military attaché at Berlin for years before and after the Franco-German War, and his daughter, who afterwards married one of the well-known von Alvensleben family, had been very kind, and also introduced me to my oldest friend, Poultney Bigelow, who was destined to be, for many years, perhaps the most trusted intimate of the Kaiser. I remember how I looked with awe upon that magnificent personage, Colonel Walker, little thinking that I should one day step into his shoes.

The Empress received me after my audience with the Kaiser, and was always very easy and pleasant to get on with. My reception by their Majesties so soon after my arrival in Berlin caused quite a flutter in some diplomatic dovecotes, whither the news was quickly transmitted. It may be mentioned that there was at this time no French military attaché in Germany. The official scope of my duties there was of course the same as in Russia, but the German character is more downright and not secretive, like the Russian official one. The Ministry of War in

Berlin was indeed sometimes very generous, while being simultaneously decidedly Anglophobe. If the Emperor should choose occasionally to say things to me as an unofficial intermediary which he could not well have broached to the ambassador, then my stay in Germany would become intensely more interesting ; but this was a matter for his Majesty's decision. Time should show.

The parade which was awaiting the Emperor on the day of my audience was a very interesting one. Frederick William III had formed, in 1820, a battalion of infantry called the *Instructional Infantry Battalion*, with the object of ensuring uniformity in the training and discipline of the Prussian army. This unit was composed of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, drawn from every infantry unit, except the Guard Corps, of that army, who were attached to the battalion for a period varying from one to two years. The plan was a very simple and effective one.

Barracks had been erected near the Neues Palais at Potsdam, and when they had been completed, Frederick William III inspected them and instituted an annual feast day in memory of the occasion. The proceedings commenced with Divine Service in the open, which was followed by a ceremonial parade and march-past before the Sovereign. When this was over, knapsacks were taken off, arms were piled, and the men then seated themselves at gaily decorated tables situated in the open near their barracks ; the grounds were very pretty. The meal was a substantial one, beer was served with it, and each man received in addition a large roll of white bread. The regulation issue for troops was made of rye—and was both very nourishing and excellent, being much better than most of the white bread universally eaten in England. As years passed, from this custom of giving a white roll emerged the name by which the anniversary parade became popularly known, namely, the *Roll Feast*.

The occasion was one of such importance that the Emperor, the Empress, and all the Princes of Prussia, together with their wives, who were in Berlin and Potsdam, invariably attended the ceremonial, as did all the general



officers of those garrisons. His Majesty went round the tables, chatting with some of the men, and tasting a roll now and again. The officers of the battalion were always invited to lunch with the Emperor and Empress.

The idea underlying the existence of the Instructional Battalion was obviously one of great practical utility. There was another custom of Frederick the Great's time which had been revived, and attracted people like myself who remember when British regimental bands were clothed in white tunics and blue trousers with red piping. The Emperor Alexander III of Russia had presented the First Regiment of Prussian Foot Guards with the parade headdress worn in the eighteenth century. It was made of metal with pompon, and cloth at the back ; it was brought out on great occasions, and was decidedly imposing.

Alexander III disliked the Germans, and especially William II, who celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his first commission in the regiment, which he had joined in 1869 at the age of ten years, by presenting it with a new parade headdress of the same pattern as before, but of white instead of the yellow metal given by the Emperor of Russia, and transferred the latter's gift to the Emperor Alexander's Prussian Grenadiers of the Guard. In Frederick the Great's reign these grenadier caps, as they were called, were worn only by grenadier regiments.

I am indebted to the kindness of Colonel von Rex for these details concerning the *Schrippen-Fest*, or Roll Feast, and headdress ; he served both in the First Foot Guards and also in the Instructional Battalion, and my readers will, I am sure, appreciate the trouble he has taken. In the following pages will be found some sharp criticisms about Germany when I was military attaché there, but I should like to say that the detestation—unwarranted detestation, as I regard it—in which England was held in that country, both before and after the Great War, did not usually extend to Englishmen personally. Bitter though German feeling is against this country—for without our intervention France and Russia must have been defeated—I personally have received the greatest kindness from Germans for nearly sixty years.

Berlin was never empty in the sense that all the more highly placed people migrated to the country or abroad after the winter season came to an end. One reason may have been that society there was not on the whole wealthy. Very shortly after our arrival, therefore, we began the indispensable round of calls; the system was the same as in St. Petersburg: as soon as one was introduced to anybody, cards had to be left, and we had each provided ourselves with many hundreds of them.

The German Empire was composed of twenty-six States; some were large, like Bavaria, while others were tiny; Schaumburg-Lippe, for instance, had an area of about one hundred and thirty square miles with a population of less than fifty thousand. Three of the number were republics, namely the Free States of Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen; they were the sole survivors of the once mighty Hanseatic League which comprised about one hundred towns, and had its own Guildhall in Cannon Street in London. Each of the remaining twenty-three States had its own ruler, who was a Federal Prince of the Empire, and exceedingly jealous of his ceremonial privileges, for he had no others, except his vote on the Federal Council of the Empire. Indeed the etiquette at these minor Courts was stricter than in the imperial capital. The ambassador was accredited to several of them, but only for ceremonial purposes, and I visited some among the number on the occasion of a royal funeral or accession. To six of these smaller Courts a British *Chargé d'Affaires* was accredited; they were Bavaria, which was the chief State after Prussia, Saxony, Baden, Hesse, Saxe-Coburg, and Waldeck. These appointments were survivals of the time when the Courts in question became "Home Courts," related to our own Royal Family. The British representatives had merely social duties to perform, all political matters being handled by the ambassador. I was soon to see something of the etiquette of a minor German Court.

The Grand Duke of Oldenburg died about a fortnight after my arrival in Berlin in June. The ambassador had gone to England on leave of absence, and the late Lord Gough was the *Chargé d'Affaires*; if Sir Frank had been

taking a holiday in Germany then his *locum tenens* would have been styled *Chargé d'Affaires*. As Oldenburg was one of our Courts for royal funerals or accessions the embassy had to send a Mission. The military attaché, when there was one available, always formed part of it, and his scarlet uniform contrasted with the dark blue-and-gold diplomatic dress.

No kinder-hearted man than Gough ever lived, and everybody loved him, as they did his wife, who was a pattern of everything that is delightful. He was constantly endeavouring to help others, and his mind was absolutely pure.

A very attractive girl in her teens was staying with us two or three years ago, and was so absorbed in a book, that my wife inquired its title. "It's called *The Green Hat*," was the reply, "but I don't expect you would care for the story; it's rather modern." Mrs. Waters told me afterwards that she had been made to feel quite her age! Mrs. Glyn's work, *The Visits of Elizabeth*, appeared when we were at Berlin, a quarter of a century earlier; it was, I believe, mild as compared with the other, but had a huge circulation. Everybody was talking about it and somebody sent a copy to Lord Gough.

We got to know of this, and the late Lady Edward Cavendish asked him for the loan of it. He demurred on the ground that some of the contents were not exactly suited to the eyes of the fair sex, not even of a grandmother. Lady Edward, however, persisted, and Gough reluctantly consented to lend it, but before handing it over he pinned together some of the more startling pages, and all the ladies of the embassy were put on their honour not to remove the pins. Ah, those entrancing and clever creatures, women! They honoured their bond in the letter, but not, alas! in the spirit: one of them—I will mention no name—*bought* a copy and put no pin in it. I am not a judge of the *Green Hat* style of literature, as I do not read it, but people have told me that Mrs. Glyn's effort should to-day be regarded as better adapted to the nursery than for grandmammias.

To return to our funeral, Lord Gough, being always

very particular about doing the right thing—he used, he told me, to wear evening clothes when travelling in the jungle of a South American Republic “lest I should forget that I am an Englishman”—was considerably exercised in his mind about the colour of the gloves to be worn at Oldenburg, and spoke to me on the subject. White was laid down in The King’s Regulations for the Army, so there was no alternative in my case, but there appeared to be nothing about the matter in the diplomatic rules. After considerable hesitation Gough decided that he and the secretary of embassy should wear black at the funeral and white when congratulating the new ruler on his accession. This seemed to be the most tactful thing to do, and it set a good example to the horde of other visitors and court officials for future occasions. To make quite sure, however, whether he had acted rightly he asked me to get a ruling from that master of ceremonial, the Prince of Wales (King Edward), and was glad to receive the royal approbation.

The funeral ceremonies were conducted with all the pomp possible ; the new Grand Duke wore a look of the deepest woe during the funeral service. When it was over we were regaled with a very substantial luncheon, which was followed by an audience to congratulate the living Sovereign on his accession to the throne—make one job of it, in fact. His face on this occasion was wreathed in smiles, and he played his part to perfection, being doubtless very glad to see the last of the invading crowd of visitors.

Being fond of trout fishing, we once spent a week or two at Rudolstadt, the capital of the tiny principality of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, as I had heard that good sport was to be had on the hotel water, but that the reigning Prince never allowed anybody on his own preserves. The little town was situated in delightful country several miles from a railway, and the royal castle was a more or less modernized fortress of the Middle Ages, and in its day impregnable.

The hotel keeper charged a good price for his fishing, but the weak point about it was that there were scarcely any fish. One day, working up-stream, I came across a

rope stretched across the stream on which were hung several pieces of rather dirty, dark linen. Seeing a trout feeding just on the far side of the rope, which I took to be the support for the hotel laundry, I put a fly over him and he was mine. At that moment a magnificent, uniformed, keeper appeared and demanded my reason for poaching on the princely preserves. It then turned out that what we had mistaken for inn cloths were the boundary marks and that on them were emblazoned the Prince's coat of arms ! I was, of course, very apologetic and was permitted to keep my catch. This kind treatment emboldened me to advance another step. Poachers in Germany are or were liable to be shot at sight, I believe.

The Prince was away from home, so I wrote a very polite letter to his Lord Chamberlain asking for leave to fish the private water. A prompt reply was sent to the effect that his Lordship felt he might safely take upon himself the responsibility, on condition that all fish caught were handed over alive to the keeper, who would be instructed to wait upon me for orders. He had to follow me about, trundling a huge water-barrel on wheels in which to place my catch. My letter had been left, together with one of my visiting cards, and a sheaf of cards was delivered in return for Madame and myself. From some of them it was evident that several offices of State were combined in one person. It was very kindly done, the sport was excellent, and the valley lovely. One spot was, the keeper told me, sacred : it was where the Queen of Holland had once bathed. We enjoyed ourselves immensely, and always regretted very much that we never had an opportunity of personally thanking the Sovereign, or of revisiting his lovely domain.

A letter had come to the embassy for me, while I was still at Oldenburg, inviting us to go to tea with the late Duchess of Albany at Potsdam, so it only reached me a day or two after the appointed date. This was a very kind act, as neither of us had had an opportunity of being presented to her Royal Highness. She had come to reside at the Villa Ingenheim, which the Emperor had lent her, for her son, Prince Charles, as heir to his uncle, the Grand

Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, would in time become a German Sovereign. This occurred sooner than had been expected, because the reigning Grand Duke (the Duke of Edinburgh) died on July 30, a few weeks afterwards.

The young prince was sixteen years old, and had left Eton to join the Cadet Corps at Lichterfelde near Berlin, in order to undergo the necessary training. The Duke of Connaught had been the next in succession, but had resigned his claim for himself and his son as he preferred to retain his English nationality. Prince Charles found his cadet life very strange after Eton, also strenuous, for the young gentlemen had to rise at 5.30 in summer. His sister, Princess Alice (now Countess of Athlone), who was a little older than he was, also lived at Potsdam. My wife and I journeyed thither on the day after my return from Oldenburg in order to write our names in the visitors' book, but the Duchess heard of this and we were commanded to stay to tea.

Royal personages differ from each other just like other people. The Duchess of Albany was exceptionally kind; she happened to be alone at the time and made my wife, who is very shy, feel at home at once. She was very interesting about her early days; born a Princess of Waldeck-Pyrmont, her family had to escape from the Austrians in 1866, when Prussia overthrew the old German Empire in a little over a month. Four years afterwards she witnessed the crossing of the Rhine by German troops on their way to France; some were serious, others were laughing and singing, others again were crying, but not from fright. They were then all in the prime of life, as the older classes were only called up later, and she often wondered how many of those whom she saw on that memorable occasion had lived to return to their homes.

The Duchess, like some other ladies of her rank, had been, she said, constitutionally shy, and in the early days of her married life she used to pray that all her visitors should arrive at tea-time after she had barricaded herself behind the tea-urn. We used to go fairly often to Potsdam in the autumn to play hockey. It was great fun. The German officers always wore the uniform frock-coat;

they were forbidden to put on plain clothes out of doors, an order which excited some of the younger Guardsmen in Berlin to disobey it occasionally. They would sally forth "improperly dressed," as the regulations say, but were careful to make for some streets where they were unlikely to meet a superior who knew them; this was called *bummeln* (to lounge about).

Among the players at Villa Ingenheim were several of the Kaiser's sons, namely Prince Eitel Friedrich, Prince August Wilhelm, Prince Oscar, their gentlemen, the daughters of some ladies of the Court (who must have been ordered to play, they looked so unhappy), Miss Lascelles, and Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Buchanan. A goodly company used to assemble to watch the game, which was a rather startling innovation. The rules were not always very strictly adhered to; on one occasion Herr von Schweinitz, a very nice and athletic subaltern, whose father had been an ambassador, got the ball, dashed down the ground, scattering aside the unfortunate royal highnesses and humbler mortals as if they were so many straws, and finished up by crashing into the enemy's goal-keeper, Miss Heron-Maxwell, whom he upset altogether, and fell on the top of her. His tightly fitting and immaculate frock-coat was split all down the back with his triumphant exertions, and the rest of the field was prostrate with laughter.

I collided once with Princess Alice, and this was the more unfortunate because I am decidedly spare of flesh. Her Royal Highness took it in very good part, but could not help exclaiming, while rubbing the spot, "Oh, Colonel Waters, you *are* bony," which was quite true. Countess von Brockdorff was for many years the Grand Mistress of the Empress's Court; she was always very pleasant to us, but Germans, male and female, stood greatly in awe of her; she was very strict and had the reputation of reporting things to her Imperial Mistress which might have been left unsaid. Her solemn figure appeared one day when we were playing hockey, and one of the Emperor's boys exclaimed as soon as he saw her: "Oh, Alice, what a bother! Here's that horrid old

Brockdorff!" Fortunately she did not overhear his remark.

Mention of this great lady's name reminds me of a little trick the Kaiser used to play on her. His Majesty was fond sometimes of reading aloud to his family circle after dinner, and the countess was occasionally rather somnolent. He would suddenly stop and inquire whether she had heard the passage, to which query, jerking herself awake, she would reply in the affirmative. "Well, then, tell me what it was about!"

Towards the end of June we were much flattered to receive an invitation from the late Count Zeppelin, the father of dirigibles, to attend the launch of his first airship in July. For five years his experiments had resulted in failure, but he was undaunted. His family came originally from the little village of his name on the Baltic, but he was a very old man before he saw it for the first time from one of his own dirigibles during the war.

He began life as an officer and, on retiring from the army after the Franco-German campaign, he took up a post at the Court of Wurtemberg, one of the last places where one should expect to look not only for an inventor, but for one whose name and products were soon to astonish the world. The financial burden of his experiments had strained his own resources to breaking point, and now some believers in his scheme had assisted him. This machine had cost about £50,000. Zeppelin was such a gentle, courteous, creature that I cannot yet believe that he ever contemplated then the tragical results of his invention in connexion with women and children; in fact, despite the enormous injury caused by his airships in England and France, he was always more interested—certainly until March 1916—in the commercial possibilities of his airships than he was in their military successes.

He was sixty-two in 1900, and was most kind when we arrived at Lake Constance a few days prior to the launch. We had never met him before, and he used to bring Mrs. Waters beautiful bouquets every day. He would have been pardoned for showing any signs of excitement, but he was as calm as if he had nothing to worry him.



The weather was hot, but splendid for the intended launch. The great airship, nearly four hundred feet in length, had been constructed in a huge shed on the bosom of the lake in the utmost secrecy. The Germans call it *Bodensee*, and three countries, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, bordered on its shores. The guests of the count found a special steamer awaiting them, and numerous other steamers were filled with sightseers. Among the spectators were some of the world's best-known aeronauts, Mr. Alexander being perhaps the most celebrated of them.

The most careful preparations had been made, and the weather conditions seemed to us to be perfect, but the trial flight could not take place on the appointed date. The huge structure was hauled very slowly out of its shed, but no attempt could be made to fly because an extremely light breeze was blowing. The fact was that the lifting power was in the circumstances insufficient, although the weight of the engine was very small (it developed only about seven horse-power) and that of the count with his mechanic was nothing unusual.

Better fortune attended the inventor on the next occasion. At last! The great airship rose slowly to a height of several hundred feet, and was travelling at a speed of about seventeen miles an hour, when she encountered a very slight breeze in an upper stratum of the atmosphere and became unmanageable. In descending, something caught in a tree, but neither the designer nor his mechanic was injured, and the damage done to the fabric was small; it was, however, sufficient to render the attempt a failure and a bitter disappointment for Zeppelin.

Everybody sympathized with the count, who took his blow manfully, and my wife told him how much we hoped Fortune should yet smile on him. The bombing raids which took place only a few years afterwards often reminded her of her remark; one of them occurred unintentionally in the park of her old home. Those who are interested in the subject will find an excellent description of the raids in the American weekly, the *Saturday Evening Post* of April 9, 1927, and some subsequent issues, by an officer who took part in them over England and elsewhere.

It should be mentioned that the German Emperor's express commands were to avoid bombing Buckingham Palace, St. Paul's, and Westminster generally. The Bank of England was one of the chief goals sought after, for it was supposed that its destruction would entirely upset our financial plans. As an instance of the remarkable bravery of the German dirigible officers, this one could scarcely be beaten : when a Zeppelin was in the clouds an officer would be lowered in a basket until he was about half a mile below the vessel in order to telephone the course. Our system of screening all lights caused the enemy enormous difficulty, whereas the French, who were careless in this respect, suffered proportionately. Nothing could exceed the admiration of the Zeppelin officers for the wonderful courage of our airmen and munition workers ; it was impossible to screen all the glare from the furnaces, so the factories were an easy mark, and the Germans said that nothing could have surpassed the bravery of the men, women, and children, employed in them ; it was most remarkable, for those poor people had no means of retaliation.

The abortive launch caused some experts to declare at once that this was the end of dirigibles, and that in the future attention should be concentrated on heavier-than-air machines as being the sole solution of the flying problem. Others amongst us thought differently ; the spade-work was finished and improvements in matters of detail should surely overcome all obstacles. Several more short flights were undertaken in July, but a considerable time was to elapse before the Ministry of War finally decided to take up the invention, and then public subscriptions literally poured in.

King Humbert of Italy was assassinated in July 1900, and there was a great official memorial service in Berlin in consequence. Anybody would suppose that the deepest mourning would be worn in the sad circumstances, and the staffs of embassies and legations together with their wives attended as a matter of course, and were allotted very prominent seats. Some of the *exotic* Powers, as the German Emperor was fond of calling them—some South

American republics for instance—had military attachés in Berlin ; they were really purchasing agents for military stores and arms, and the wife of one of them had relieved the gloom of her crape, which was very black indeed, with a large bunch of red roses in her hat ! Somehow she had arrived with a crowd of other people and so escaped the eyes of the court officials who were showing us to our seats. But one of them soon espied her—she was in the second row—and requested her to withdraw. The lady refused ; it was her right to be where she was, and she certainly would not abandon her place. The chamberlain explained that any vestige of bright colour was absolutely inadmissible on such an occasion. Thereupon the lady, torn between the resolve to keep her seat and the fear of other consequences if she should flout the rule of the Prussian Court—of which she seldom saw anything—removed her large hat, tore out the offending flowers, replaced her headgear, and remained quite unperturbed where she was !

One difficulty was always with us ; we were very poor, and as my appointment at the time was only temporary, we could not venture to rent an apartment. Living was cheap in many ways in Berlin, but this did not apply to the leading hotels. Those two distinguished men, Lord Derby and Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, were eventually able to get this strain greatly alleviated, otherwise I should have missed some of the most interesting experiences of my life. In the meantime, however, something had to be done to make both ends meet ; consequently, after our return from Rudolstadt we migrated to a *Pension*, in plain English a boarding-house. Establishments of this description vary, of course, like hotels ; but we were fortunate in finding one kept by the wife of an officer, a nobleman, who was incapacitated by wounds received in the Franco-German War. Her name was Frau von Grote ; she was very nice, and did all in her power to make everybody comfortable, but some of her guests, who were all “ born,” must have been exasperating with their fads.

This was one of the peculiarities of German social life ;

a lady of her position could keep a boarding-house, and would not be looked down upon, but she could not have engaged in trade. Berlin society was charmingly simple ; it did not care where you lived or how poor you were ; if it took you up at all, it did so for your own sake. We met Frau von Grote's son afterwards when I was commanding in North China, where he was making a good career in the diplomatic service.

## CHAPTER V

THE struggle in South Africa was not our only cause for anxiety. The depredations of the Boxers in China was another and very serious one. In its inception and progress the movement was entirely anti-foreign, and had been going on for a considerable time before it culminated in the murder of Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister at Peking, and the siege of the legations, in the summer of 1900. There had been many other risings of the same nature, but this one was distinguished from all its predecessors by the fact that it had the active support of the Manchu dynasty, that is to say of the Empress Dowager, the actual ruler.

The outrageous assassination, and the siege, caused all the nations concerned to combine to exact reparation, and after a great deal of intrigue it was arranged that the German Field-Marshal, Count von Waldersee, should be Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces. He had succeeded the great Moltke as Chief of the Great General Staff, but his intimacy with Bismarck caused his transfer to a post of minor importance in the year 1891. His appointment was a tribute to his master's diplomatic skill; Sir Frank Lascelles told me that when it was first suggested to the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, he was reported to have exclaimed, "I'll be damned if British troops shall serve under any but a British general!"

At one time the general belief was that all the members of the legations had been murdered; many ladies in Berlin put on crape, and a great memorial service was to have been held, but was countermanded just in time. The Foreign Office, by request of the War Office, sent me a telegram on August 14, asking whether I should like to join the Field-Marshal's staff as British representative on

it. The Kaiser had made a fiery speech to some of his troops on embarkation, ordering them to take no prisoners, and to act so that for a thousand years to come "no Chinese shall dare to look askance on any German." The Minister of War, replying later to a question in the Reichstag about reported atrocities on the part of German troops, said : "What they are now doing in China is merely retribution for what the Huns made us suffer for centuries." Grierson also wrote to me afterwards from China and said the Germans, in order to "blood" their soldiery, were so brutal that all their coolies—and the troops could not move a step without them—had bolted from sheer fright.

The Foreign Office telegram offered me a chance not to be missed. There was just time for me to go to London, receive my instructions, and join Waldersee on August 21, at his port of embarkation. After telegraphing my acceptance we started for England in a few hours' time, only to learn on arrival that the authorities had meanwhile altered their minds. It was considered undesirable to effect another change so soon at Berlin, and Grierson had already been ordered to leave Africa for China. The Boxer rising provided the German Government with an excellent pretext for increasing the navy ; no suitable warship had been available for Waldersee and his staff, who travelled, therefore, in a North German Lloyd steamer, and the Reichstag passed a far-reaching Navy Bill soon afterwards. Being in England on a free ticket, the opportunity of taking a little holiday before returning to my post was one not to be missed. Berlin was a capital place, for I made a good many journeys in this way.

Some at least of the allied Powers saw in this expedition the break-up of China and her partition among the European nations ; Japan might be allowed to take some small share, and the United States were, as they afterwards conclusively showed, quite free from any ambition in this respect. In the light of present-day events (1927) the European schemes were premature. Just before starting for the manoeuvres in September it was thought that I might be able to throw some light on British intentions or desires, and an approach was opened in rather

a roundabout manner, which reminded me of the ancient zigzag saps formerly employed in investing a fortress.

Vice-Admiral von Senden-Bibran, the chief of the Emperor's Naval Cabinet, told me that Nicholas II of Russia, who had received the Boer delegate, Dr. Leyds, informed him, in reply to his appeal for intervention, that both on financial and political grounds no assistance could be rendered by Russia.

Leyds was a remarkably clever and unscrupulous man ; he was indeed President Kruger's evil genius. Born in Java of an unknown mother, and educated in Holland as a lawyer, he got in touch with Kruger, who was twice his age, about twenty years before the Boer War broke out. The President wanted somebody to act as his Chief of Cabinet, who had the scheming qualities which Leyds possessed. Some time before the commencement of the struggle, the latter had an office in Brussels whence he directed his Press propaganda against England. An attempt to counteract this move was made by the War Office. The late Colonel Repington conceived the idea, which was approved by the authorities, of setting up a Propaganda and Intelligence Department in the Belgian capital in order to neutralize Leyds's work. This was before war broke out. Repington was equipped with funds and took up his new abode under an assumed name, which should, it was hoped, deceive the foe as to his personality ; he was, in fact, a kind of one-man company nominally engaged in legitimate trade. His wife came one day to the War Office to get his address in consequence of some urgent matter, but was told that even the country in which her husband was residing could not be disclosed. I believe Repington enjoyed his stay in Brussels very much, but the official result of his underground mission was *nil* ; Leyds knew all about that sort of thing.

Few people to-day, I imagine, believe that the huge cost of secret service during the Great War had any appreciable effect on its outcome ; indeed intelligence concerning purely military matters of the first importance was sometimes sadly at fault, as the following episode shows. When Roumania guaranteed in 1916 to end the

war on her own terms, she began by having some trifling successes over the Austrians, and reports reached the French G.H.Q. at Chantilly that Hindenburg intended to send German troops to help them.

At that time, on the West Front, the Allies still persisted in their policy of attrition, which had already caused some critics to declare, exaggeratively no doubt, that hundreds and hundreds of thousands of casualties were frequently being incurred in order to gain some small strips of devastated territory. The allied idea had been expressed by a leading expert in 1915 that the Germans could have no more men available after the commencement of 1916, and when this forecast turned out to be wrong it was declared that the latter year would certainly see the supply exhausted.

Basing its calculations on this assumption, the French Intelligence Division scouted the idea that the Germans could send a single man to the Roumanian front ; Alexyev, who had, as I reported before the event, foreseen exactly what Hindenburg could do, was laughed at. The French declared that the Germans had only half of one division left in reserve. When the latter dispatched half a dozen complete divisions and overran Roumania, an officer of the French section concerned (the second) put his head in his hands and exclaimed : "*Mais où les prennent-ils, nom de Dieu ?*"

To return to Senden-Bibran, after telling me about the Emperor of Russia and Leyds he asked my opinion about the sequel to the operations in China, and a letter, putting the same question, also reached me from my old friend, Lauenstein, the German military agent in St. Petersburg. My answer in each case was that I did not know, nor, I am sure, did anybody else ; but I began to wonder whether a project was on foot to jockey us out of some of our interests in the Yang-Tse-Kiang region. So far as my memory serves me, I think there was a fairly successful one.

The grand manœuvres were to take place in the early days of September at Stettin, and Lord Lonsdale, a great personal friend of the Emperor's, came over for them



together with the late General Sir John Slade. The main idea underlying these military exercises was not so much to attempt to train troops in field warfare when no enemy was shooting at them, but to give senior generals opportunities of handling large bodies of men and of making these march long distances, for a proportion of reservists was also called up for training. The system was simple enough, because the military year ended after the manoeuvres; those who had completed their period of colour service returned to their homes and the new recruits joined shortly afterwards. In other words, all recruits began and completed their training simultaneously, whereas with us officers are faced with the difficulty caused by recruits arriving on any day of the year. One might think that the general standard of efficiency would suffer in consequence, but the Great War refuted this theory conclusively. The excellence of the training of our rank and file was wonderful, and the standard of their shooting was so extraordinarily high that, at times, the Germans believed our men to be armed with automatic rifles.

A long time, and the most careful individual training, had been required in order to bring our regular army to this pitch of perfection, and the real founder of our modern system of musketry was General Sir Ian Hamilton. When I was in India in 1889 and 1890 he was also serving there, and he astonished the military world one day by proclaiming his revolutionary views on army rifle practice. He was indeed laughed at by some infantry officers, but he persisted in his efforts, which paved the way for the wonderful results attained in the World War. In their absence our original little force might well have been battered out of existence.

On the evening of our arrival at Stettin, September 7, a banquet was given by the Province of Pomerania to meet the Emperor and Empress. This was followed by a river trip on the Oder, to which the Municipality of the town had invited us. The banks were illuminated for a distance of five miles and the fireworks were magnificent, altogether a wonderful sight. The Emperor did not, for some reason, accept banquet invitations from cities, so

that this was the only manner in which Stettin could entertain their Majesties.

Mention may be made here of a German marching exercise which has often foolishly excited derision. This is the celebrated *Parade Marsch*, or, as known to us, the Goose Step. It was in vogue in the German army for two reasons: firstly, for purely ceremonial purposes on parade; secondly, troops were occasionally ordered to break into it for short distances, especially after a long march, in order to keep the muscles of the leg as strong as possible, so that tired men should be able to keep a trot for the town, as they used to say in the old coaching days. The *Parade Marsch* was very effective in both respects, and was typical of German thoroughness.

On the following morning there was a grand parade where everything went with the usual clockwork precision. The Empress, dressed in her cuirassier uniform, led her regiment past William II at a canter. The original plan had been that it was to trot past, but, at the last moment, the Emperor thought it would look better the other way. She was riding a magnificent chestnut, which would certainly have bolted unless the rider had had really good hands.

In the evening there was a State banquet at the palace at half-past six o'clock. The hour was early because a number of local notabilities had been invited and there was to be a big reception afterwards. It lasted from eight until about one o'clock, and everybody remained standing during the whole of that time. In the course of the evening the Empress came and spoke to me, and I said how much I envied her the charger she had ridden. It then appeared that her Majesty had long been wanting to ride it, but the Emperor, fearing it might be too much of a handful, had taken a long time before giving a reluctant consent.

Somehow or other we continued talking for a time, and then I remarked that she must be very tired after being on her feet for so many hours, for it was then past midnight. Her Majesty replied that she was indeed nearly exhausted; she had had a long and very trying day since

the early morning, and she went on : " You see, there are so many people here to-night whom I have never met before, and they expect to be presented. They all leave me to make the conversation, and if I am sitting down I never know how to end it without hurting their feelings, and there is not time to say much to each one." A very thoughtful lady.

I met a friend of my Berlin schooldays in Count von Oriola at Stettin ; we had often wondered what had become of each other. At that time Germany had neither fleet nor colonies, and I had told him of my unfulfilled wish to enter the British Navy ; this had, perhaps, interested him ; at any rate, he was now captain of a German man-of-war and aide-de-camp to Prince Henry of Prussia, the Emperor's brother, whom he accompanied on the latter's visit to New York. A near relative of his was one of the most Anglophobe members of the Reichstag, and my friend, like a good German sailor, felt the same, but retribution, if slight, was soon to fall upon him, as we shall see.

In 1900 there was no French military attaché to Germany, and the Emperor had often endeavoured to create better relations between his country and France. On this occasion he had invited the French Government to send a Military Mission to the manœuvres, and the proposal had been accepted ; it gave the French an opportunity of seeing something, however little, of the hereditary foe. General Michal was head of it, and one of the members was Colonel (afterwards General) Silvestre, the chief of the President's military household.

The latter made a curiously tactless remark, a most unusual thing for a Frenchman to do. We happened to be conversing for a few moments after dinner, and there was a crowd of people, including some of the Emperor's suite, standing close enough to hear what was said. Silvestre was very much upset at Waldersee's appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces in North China, and I felt as if a bucket of iced water had been suddenly poured down my back in the hot room when he asked me : "*Mais qui est donc ce Monsieur Waldersee ?*"

Fortunately the Germans restrained themselves, being, so to say, in their own house. This was on a Saturday.

On the Sunday morning everybody attended a Church Parade which took place in a barrack square. The officiating chaplain was just in front of a mammoth Iron Cross, with 1870-71 in huge figures on it, and specially erected for the occasion. General Michal and his staff were placed exactly opposite to it. Whether this was a vicarious rejoinder to Silvestre's remark to me, or whether it was merely one of those thoroughly clumsy acts for which German officialdom was so justly famous, I cannot say.

The manœuvres commenced on Monday, September 10 ; we started about six o'clock by train, reached our horses about eight, and were back soon after six in the evening. The procedure was the same throughout, the whole business lasting five days. There were one or two amusing incidents. The Emperor told General Slade that he had wanted a British general to be present just to let him see that there were other things to do with an army besides the time-honoured practice of storming Cæsar's Camp at Aldershot. His Majesty had already given me his criticism on the conduct of the war in South Africa when he received me at Potsdam immediately after my arrival in June, and this time we were to see the real thing, at least as real as imagination could make it.

But man proposes, and God disposes. On the very first day matters ended in a deadlock. Each of the two opposing armies had a cavalry division ; these approached within two or three miles of each other and then neither would advance any further. The idea predominant in the mind of each cavalry commander was to make his opponent deploy, and then, catching him in the very act, scatter him to the four winds of heaven. The weak point in the scheme was obvious. I believe the Emperor made some nasty criticisms afterwards and Slade, who had come successfully out of a tight fix with his battery of horse artillery at Maiwand twenty years earlier, chuckled.

I believe that British naval officers nowadays are given some instruction in the art of grand strategy and tactics

in land warfare. If so, the idea is not altogether new. The Emperor took advantage of the proximity of the sea to order a batch of naval officers from Swinemünde to attend the manœuvres. Horses were provided for them, and, in the course of the forenoon, a resounding smack behind me attracted my attention. It appeared that a naval officer's mount had run into the stern of my charger, which had responded with a terrific kick; fortunately it struck only the other animal's chest without doing any hurt; but the horse then ran away and deposited its rider in a swamp. Later on four other naval officers were seen driving away in a country cart. My poor friend, Oriola, was the victim in the swamp, and he told me afterwards that he was riding up to talk to me when the contretemps occurred. They were rash to wear spurs.

There was nothing particular for me to do after the manœuvres were over, so it occurred to me to take some leave in England. There was no difficulty about this, but when my application came to be put in the Chancery Register, my attention was called to the fact that the previous entry in it was also, "Colonel Waters applies for leave." Poor Prince Christian Victor, elder son of Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, died in South Africa just then; his younger brother, Prince Albert, was an officer of the Hussars of the Guard at Potsdam, and often came to the embassy.

The position of certain princes was somewhat anomalous at the Court of Berlin, where they did not stand high on the list of precedence in Prussia. Altogether the situation was often awkward. At the embassy, for instance, grandchildren of Queen Victoria were treated with the consideration due to their birth, but outside it they might have to take a much lower place. The Prussian Court also resented the arbitrary promotion of males to the rank of Royal Highness; that of Prince Henry of Battenberg was a case in point. Where ladies were concerned it was a different matter; the Empress Augusta, wife of William II, attained royal rank on her marriage, and so did her daughter-in-law, the Crown Princess; no doubt this occasioned heart-burning in some quarters, as even ladies of royal birth

are not always exempt from what, I understand, is called cattishness ; but the situation had to be accepted.

Dame Experience, that harsh and evergreen old teacher, had at last made the German military authorities realize that things are seldom so good that they cannot be improved. Tel-el-Kebir in 1882 was, I believe, the last occasion when British troops fought in their national scarlet, and Lord Wolseley had succeeded in introducing from India the khaki which has now been worn by millions of our compatriots.

The great continental military Powers, however, still clung to their time-honoured dress, but the Boxer expedition in the very trying summer heat had proved conclusively that it was preferable to keep men fit in suitable clothing instead of incapacitating them by making them wear thick garments and a tight collar round the neck. The Ministry of War at Berlin was, therefore, thinking of making a change in the right direction which led ultimately to the comfortable "field-grey" uniform of 1914 ; it was at last realized that the summer months in Europe are often desperately hot, and the old uniforms too conspicuous.

The Emperor was, of course, greatly interested in the subject and sent for me one day in November to examine and discuss his samples. He was in high good humour on this occasion, for some Anglo-German agreement had just been concluded ; I do not recollect what it was about, except that it was of great importance at the time, for I made a note that it was "a marvel of diplomacy and a well-kept secret until the end. No other ambassador would have carried it through ; it came in the nick of time too."

To digress for a moment, a curious trait of diplomacy will doubtless attract the reader's attention, namely, that secret treaties could be and were concluded between two Governments one of which was encouraging its citizens to detest those of the other ; further, when the relations between them became still more strained, both parties to one of these agreements would continue to keep its terms secret, although it may have contemplated the association of those citizens in military operations ; if the two Govern-

ments did not have this possibility in view then there was no object in making a treaty.

Rumours about some such compact were often spread ; they were frequently due to the indiscretion of somebody in high place, and then our Government would be questioned in the House of Commons. The late Mr. Gibson Bowles had a knack of putting inconvenient queries, and on October 22, 1902, he inquired whether we had a secret agreement with Germany. Lord Cranborne (now Lord Salisbury) stated in reply that if there were one it could not be disclosed. Members were quite satisfied with this answer.

The proposed German colonial equipment was in some respects a decided improvement on ours ; the material of the clothing was woollen, whereas the British was linen, adapted admirably for keeping a man cold in cold weather or at night, as well as for causing chills after severe perspiration. The headdress was also much in advance of our pattern, for it protected the temples better and the peak at the back could be turned up, so that a man could lie down and take aim without his helmet being in the way. The inventor had patented it, and being a patriotic German said he would not grant licences to manufacture in any foreign country. I tried on several of the articles and was able to suggest one or two minor alterations, but the equipment had been very carefully thought out. The troops of the German Expeditionary Force had of course been supplied with clothing suited for their needs, but the idea of having a much more convenient dress for service generally had evidently taken root.

A considerable time was, however, to elapse before a field service dress for European warfare was finally sanctioned ; the Germans never changed things in a hurry, and a furious storm was to burst in the following year because an English newspaper correspondent at the manœuvres criticized the existing patterns of German uniforms as unsuitable for modern warfare. As will be seen in Chapters IX and X the Kaiser himself championed the invectives of his national Press.

## CHAPTER VI

THE Emperor was not, at this time, the autumn of 1900, best pleased with the United States. My impression was that he had hoped somehow to gain a footing on the South American continent, in spite of the often declared attitude of the mighty Western Republic in this connexion. But speculations of this nature are vain unless you know what are the principal political interests of the Government whose aspirations you wish to discover—its real views, and not merely those which it serves out for public consumption.

Something else may have disappointed the Kaiser, but I am sure he was annoyed with the Americans, otherwise he would not have so long delayed his reception of their new military attaché. By doing so, he could vent his dissatisfaction with them in a manner to which no official objection could be taken. Major Kerr, the officer in question, had distinguished himself in Indian warfare, and was a nice, quiet man. He had reported his arrival about a couple of months previously, in September, and had often asked when the Emperor would be likely to receive him, but of course nobody knew.

In the following November Captain Ewart arrived as British naval attaché and was soon informed that the Emperor would receive him. Major Kerr was to have his audience at the same time; having had no previous knowledge of Germany, he had assumed, so it was reported, that William II spoke only his native tongue, but was dissuaded from taking an interpreter to Potsdam, so the Germans declared, but then they had probably heard some imperial jest in this connexion.

The Emperor was immensely gratified by the fact that Ewart was not a roving attaché appointed to travel all over Europe, and he received him first. The audience



was a lengthy one, for Ewart, besides bearing a high reputation professionally, was a very nice man indeed, whom everybody liked. Then came Kerr's turn, but, what the reason was I do not know, he was kept only two or three minutes. This irritated him very much because, from an official standpoint, he should, in ordinary circumstances, have been the first to be received. Travelling back to Berlin with Ewart he expressed his feelings with regard to Germans generally just as they occurred to him, and there was a Prussian officer in the compartment who understood, although he did not speak English. But nothing happened.

I was not long in Berlin before an invitation was sent to me to lunch with the first regiment of Prussian Foot Guards at Potsdam. It was a picked corps because the sons of the reigning house commenced their careers in it, while the other officers were selected from friends of the royal family. Money had nothing to do with the matter, nor indeed would untold wealth of itself open the door to German society. "Not all the water in the Atlantic Ocean could render him eligible," was the remark made to my wife about a very kind-hearted man who did not possess all the necessary qualifications. The Emperor, however, had broader views. Herr Ihne, the Court architect, for instance, was a very interesting man, and his wife was as nice as she was clever and artistic; whereas it was impossible for them to attend court ceremonies, the Emperor and Empress used to invite them to family dinners.

German society was not as a rule rich, but, as already mentioned, business in any form was an insurmountable barrier to entering it; if you went into trade you had to change your name, otherwise the Family Council would manage to exert sufficient moral pressure; the ban did not, however, apply to the ownership of, say, coal mines, but somebody else had to work them for the proprietor; this social system inevitably narrowed the outlook of the influential people. A most striking change has, however, taken place since the Great War, and is bound to increase very much indeed Germany's prosperity to the detriment of her trade competitors.

Although the Germans were, on the whole, very simple in their ordinary life, a dinner-party had to be more or less of a banquet ; even if the host and hostess were only Lieutenant and Frau Lieutenant, it was not the thing to invite less than a score or so of guests on such an occasion. If, however, one lunched or dined at an officers' mess either privately or to meet some great man, no change was made in the ordinary simple arrangements.

When I lunched for the first time with the First Guards regiment, the Emperor was present, and it happened that the question of the cost of officers' messing in England had been the cause of a great deal of controversy. Some regiments were much more expensive under this heading than others, but the fact remained that in no unit could a subaltern pay his absolutely indispensable out-of-pocket expenses and have three meals daily in mess unless he had some private means. Mr. St. John Brodrick (now Lord Midleton) took a deep interest in the question, so the opportunity afforded to me at Potsdam of ascertaining the daily cost of living was one not to be missed. The menu was not a special one and the luncheon was excellent, consisting of one entrée, a joint and vegetables, a plain sweet and coffee. The total daily cost of luncheon and dinner was eighteen pence, and Mr. Brodrick asked the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, whether he could not adopt this as a model for our army.

An attempt, not the first of its kind, was made on the Emperor's life on November 16, when a woman in the crowd at Breslau flung a hatchet at, but missed, him. Every decent-minded individual has, of course, a horror of this sort of crime, but his Majesty's escape gives rise to some reflections. If the would-be assassin had been successful the Crown Prince would have become King of Prussia and German Emperor, a position for which he was never fitted ; quite the contrary, in fact. With scant knowledge of public affairs he became strongly militaristic, was impatient of control, greatly lacking in mental vision, and steadiness of character.

His upbringing was not calculated to strengthen his character, and the same remark applies to his brothers,

except perhaps Prince Adalbert, whom I never saw ; he was in the navy, and was reputed by good judges to be the best of the Emperor's family, and one hears that the Crown Prince's sons are all that should be desired. Prince Eitel Friedrich seemed a dull youth, and the Princes Oscar and August Wilhelm were of schoolboy age in my time.

The premise is not that the Kaiser's sons were badly brought up, or that they were neglected in their youth ; nobody who knows anything about the imperial family would suggest such a thing. Husband and wife were as thoroughly domesticated a pair in the best sense of the term as could be found anywhere. The mistake lay, in the opinion of some of us, in excessive care. Briefly put, the parents treated their sons too much as if they were young children when they were already emerging from the childhood stage. The Princes of Prussia were always subjected to rigorous discipline ; it may have been too harsh, but at any rate many people will concede that this was preferable to having no discipline at all.

One very good point about it was that the Hohenzollern princes were always taught some trade ; this was traditional in their house, the idea really being that the family should have something in common with ordinary mortals ; the link was the dignity of manual labour, and the Crown Prince could have earned a living by becoming a blacksmith ; he must have found his knowledge useful when he was living in Holland. The Kaiser had not been trained in this way, owing to the weakness of his left arm.

Too much severity in childhood, however, frequently has results the reverse of those intended. The Emperor's sons were kept younger than their years, so that when they grew up they took more freedom sometimes than was good for them. It was not that the Crown Prince resented being placed in arrest occasionally, although these sudden punishments no doubt disconcerted his plans at times, but he was subjected to too strict an accountability, if the phrase may be permitted.

On one occasion he had arranged to attend some evening entertainment, when he was officially of age, in Berlin,

and the Empress somehow got to hear of his intention. He was then an officer living at Potsdam in his own quarters, and was ordered to dine with her Majesty. Seeking a way of escape, he sent a telephone message to say that he was unwell and unable to go. The next thing he heard was that the Empress was at the door ! He had only just time to throw a nightgown over the plain clothes, which he had audaciously put on, and jump into bed, when his mother appeared. She was, or pretended to be, in great anxiety about his health, and in spite of his protests insisted on giving him a nauseous draught which she had brought with her ; she then sat at his bedside reading aloud from a good book, nor did her Majesty leave him until the hour was too late for his little expedition. One of his brother officers told my wife the story a day or two afterwards.

As the Crown Prince grew older he formed a party of his own which often caused the German Government a great deal of trouble, but this might have happened in any event. His nature was vain and shallow, but strictness was sometimes wrongly applied. Like most males, he was fond of ladies' society, and he wished occasionally to give a present. His purse before his marriage in 1905 was, however, so small—at least its contents were—that the only possible way by which he could gratify his desire might be by parting with something from his own personal belongings.

If he should go away on a visit he was not allowed to take a selection of gifts with him ; none, at any rate, suitable for a member of the fair sex. When he was confirmed, his mother had given him a ring, and some studs or sleeve-links ; these presents are customary in Germany on the occasion in question, and are not necessarily of a religious description. The Crown Prince met a very attractive girl during one of his visits abroad, and gave her some trifle. Not long after his return home the Empress inquired about her gifts, and becoming suspicious demanded that they should all be produced. A searching cross-examination revealed the truth, and there was a terrific row. The Prince's host was accused of having

neglected to keep sufficiently careful ward over his guest, and the end of it was that the fair one had to restore the gift to the original owner. Perhaps the Empress felt that her son had too little ballast and might even enter into a morganatic marriage. This was a contingency too dreadful to contemplate.

The Crown Prince was never fitted for the great position to which he was heir either intellectually or morally, and he is not likely to loom large again on the political horizon. His sons are said to take after their amiable and sensible mother, especially the eldest, who is just twenty-one. A constitutional monarchy is well adapted to the German temperament, and should he ever become Sovereign he will have had the advantage of the experience bought by sorrow and disaster. I am told, however, that the German monarchists do not desire the early abolition of the Republic, their view on the whole being that things had better go on quietly for a time, as they are now doing.

The only daughter among the Kaiser's seven children was quite young when I was at Berlin, eight or nine years of age ; the Empress used to say that the Emperor was too strict with the boys, while he spoilt the girl. She eventually married the Duke of Brunswick, heir to the Duke of Cumberland, and the match was largely a political one arranged to settle the long-standing feud which had existed since the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.

It was never my habit to keep a diary ; one reason is that I am too lazy, and besides a day-book must contain a lot of uninteresting small-talk. My custom was to make a note of anything more or less unusual, while letters or copies of them filled up gaps. On December 2 I recorded that President Kruger had been having "a fine time" in Paris and intended visiting Berlin, although the German Government had endeavoured to dissuade him. On the previous day a cipher telegram had come from Queen Victoria for the Emperor, imploring him, in the interests of peace, not to receive the Boer President. The message was very strongly worded, and rather pathetic.

As soon as it had been deciphered, Lord Gough, the *Chargé d'Affaires*, sent it to Count zu Eulenburg, the

Lord Chamberlain, for transmission to his Majesty. On the following day, December 2, Eulenburg returned the telegram with the suggestion that it would be, perhaps, better to send it to the Chancellor, Bülow, for delivery to the Emperor. Whether the Queen had been rightly or wrongly advised in dispatching her communication does not affect the point that her Majesty expected its immediate delivery; Lord Gough, after thinking the matter over, decided to send the telegram through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Department with which he dealt.

On the same evening, December 2, Wolff's telegraph agency published a dispatch sent from Cologne on that date stating that Herr von Tschirschky, the German Minister at Luxemburg, had met President Kruger at Cologne and informed him that the Emperor regretted that the engagements, which he had already made, prevented his Majesty from receiving the Boer President, who thereupon abandoned his journey to Berlin and went to Holland. I thanked God, and turned on all the electric lights in the Chancery as an illumination in honour of the event.

If the Emperor had received Kruger it is possible that the pressure of German public opinion might have created a new if temporary Triple Alliance. The French Government had previously wanted Germany and Russia to intervene with it in the South African War. The Kaiser, knowing full well the effect of his reply, had answered that he would consider the matter on the basis that the three Powers should recognize all existing treaties. No French Government could do this, for it would have been tantamount to acknowledging the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, and so the idea was dropped. Had he acted differently, the Emperor William could have struck a tremendous blow at the British Empire.

Opinion in the Chancery was divided as to whether Eulenburg showed the telegram to the Kaiser, who then ordered him to return it to Lord Gough. It is highly improbable that Eulenburg would have dared to cause delay to a communication from the Queen; her Majesty had telegraphed

to the Emperor during the Greco-Turkish War of 1898, and Eulenburg had not hesitated to deliver the message. I always liked him very much personally, but he was, like everybody else, a Boerphile. Had the Emperor already resolved, before receiving the Queen's message, not to receive Kruger? My view is that he had. The evidence points that way because Tschirschky saw Kruger on Sunday, December 2, and must have received his instructions from Berlin in time to enable him to proceed from Luxemburg to Cologne, a considerable distance, while the Queen's telegram only reached the embassy on December 1, and then filtered through to Eulenburg.

Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein was staying in Berlin at the time, and travelled to Potsdam on December 2, in company with Baron von Eckhardstein, Counsellor of the German Embassy in London; both of them were going to see the Emperor. Eckhardstein told his Royal Highness during the journey thither that when the papers respecting Kruger's proposed visit to Berlin were laid before his Majesty, the latter wrote these words in the margin: "*Sagen, dass ich ihn nicht zu sehen wünsche*" (Tell him that I do not wish to see him). This was boiled down into a form more complimentary to the President. Prince Christian was absolutely certain that the decision not to receive him had been reached on the imperial initiative before the Queen's message could possibly have been delivered to the Emperor. This is my view, and Bülow, who had only recently been appointed Chancellor, may—to judge by what we know of him—have held an opinion different to that of his master. Prince Christian had not heard of the telegram until I told him about it, when he exclaimed:

"Oh, why did they let her do it?"

He came to the conclusion that somebody about the Queen's person must have suggested the plan to her Majesty, and he wondered who it was. It appeared afterwards that Princess Christian was the originator of the idea, possibly in the hope that her husband would be requested to deliver the message. His Royal Highness, however, remarked to me on his own initiative that, if he had been

asked to do this, he would have refused, having no intention of getting embroiled in family quarrels.

When I was dining with Prince Christian on December 6 he said that he had again visited the Kaiser and told him that Kruger would probably make another attempt to be received. His Majesty replied that if he should do so he would know how to refuse the request, adding that nothing would induce him to see the President. The Emperor did not allude to the Queen's telegram, which had been returned to Lord Gough by Baron von Richthofen with a note stating that it had not been delivered, as this was the best course to adopt in view of the fact that the matter had already been settled. I forget whether the Queen was informed that her express commands had apparently been disobeyed.

When Sir Frank Lascelles returned from England just after Christmas he told me he was positive about two things: that the Emperor did know privately about the telegram but that, before he could by any possibility have heard of or seen it, he had already made up his mind not to receive Kruger. Lascelles was convinced that Eulenburg would never have dared to delay the message, but his Excellency thought it had been a mistake to dispatch it, and had told the Queen this. His Excellency had feared that the Kaiser would resent an attempt to bring pressure to bear upon him as German Emperor. Her Majesty's reply had been that she had "never doubted" him. Sir Frank Lascelles' sound judgment was abundantly justified very soon afterwards. He saw the Emperor in January, and spoke to him about the Queen's message, and it then became evident that his Majesty knew of it, but not until he had made up his mind for himself.

A rumour had spread that the Queen had appealed to her grandson, and a question was asked in the Reichstag. In reply, Bülow stigmatized the allegation as being absolutely devoid of foundation, and added that he would not have tolerated for one moment any attempt at interference by her Majesty.

The Emperor was very sharply criticized in Berlin for his treatment of the Kruger incident. No doubt the



President thought that what was considered suitable in 1896, when the famous telegram was sent to him, would hold good in 1900, and he must have felt very sore when disillusioned. Twice in the latter year the Kaiser had the opportunity of adding enormously, possibly fatally, to the difficulties of England, and on each occasion he refused, although German public opinion would have supported him unanimously. If he had been scheming for the downfall of our empire he was far too astute and powerful a monarch not to have grasped one of the two chances which had been offered to him, namely, the French proposal for intervention, or the suggested visit of President Kruger.

Countess Schönborn, one of Berlin's great ladies, had her own theory about the latter incident. Her husband had been with the former Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, and she herself was much interested in affairs of State. She told me that Kruger's rebuff was due to fright on the part of the Kaiser, who ought, she said, to have received the President, if only as a matter of ordinary courtesy. To my reply that his Majesty feared neither man nor devil, she answered: "No, but he is certainly afraid of his grandmother!"

A very distinguished man of European reputation, Field-Marshal Count Blumenthal, died just before Christmas while I was absent for a few days in Baden. On my return to Berlin there was a telegram awaiting me from the Prince of Wales, directing me to represent him at the funeral; he had been very fond of Blumenthal, who served as Chief of the Staff to the Prince's brother-in-law, the Crown Prince Frederick, in 1870-71, and who was also much liked in England.

Interment in Germany usually happened very soon after death, and I did not hear the news until I read the telegram. My first thought was that the funeral must have already taken place, as the telegram had arrived about three days previously, but I learnt that it was postponed until December 28, as the Emperor intended to be present. I was not going to commit a second lapse like the one before Diamond Jubilee's Derby, and sent a prompt reply, but not before an equerry had dispatched a message to Lord

Gough, the *Chargé d'Affaires*, inquiring whether the royal command had reached me. I was able to send a satisfactory explanation to the Prince, who had, however, met Lascelles in the meantime, and gave his Excellency a message to deliver on his return to Berlin. "Tell him," said his Royal Highness, "that when I telegraph to him he *must* answer me!"

If the telegram to me had been read in the Chancery and its contents telegraphed, there would have been no delay; I always prefer to have these communications opened by anybody in my absence; postal clerks have already read them, and so might anybody else so far as I am concerned, but a good many people surround a telegram with an odour of secrecy, apparently just because it is a telegram.

General Sir Leopold Swaine came to represent Queen Victoria at Blumenthal's funeral, and I was also ordered to express the deep sympathy of the British Army to the family on their bereavement; it did not appear to be much appreciated, judging from the manner of its reception by the member of the family to whom I communicated the message; it struck me that he was distinctly cool in his manner.

My wife took Swaine and myself to purchase wreaths for the ceremony. We were rather puzzled at first when the florist inquired whether they were to be adorned or not with long streamers and bows; we had not been aware that their inclusion was an additional mark of respect, so we had the whole thing done in style, and the names of the senders were emblazoned in gold letters on the streamers; altogether a very elaborate affair. So was the funeral, for it stretched from one end of Unter den Linden to the other, and must have been a remarkable sight.

It was about this time, the end of December, that a strong feeling of uneasiness arose in many German circles about the policy pursued towards China in particular, and in Europe in general. Germans of all ranks told me this, so there must have been a solid foundation for their apprehensions. There was undoubtedly a feeling of depression throughout the country. A hard-working

manufacturer of rifle stocks, in a small way of business at Freiburg in Baden, told me that the estimates for the expedition to China were likely to be far short of what would be required, unless a more reasonable policy should be adopted. He went on to say that the financial situation had brought Germany within measurable distance of revolution. Business generally was in a rather bad way; many workers had been discharged from factories, while others had been put on half-time, and the colonial policy was blamed for this.

No doubt the disquietude had been increased, perhaps even aroused, by the Emperor's inflammatory speech to a portion of the expeditionary force for China, and the Minister of War had emphasized it. This sort of thing was, of course, very disconcerting for the Chancellor, Bülow, although the Reichstag could not displace a Minister. But we need not waste any sympathy on the Chancellor, for there was, I imagine, no more shifty figure in the diplomatic world of his day, which is saying a good deal. On the few occasions when we met he always went out of his way to be pleasant, and never failed to assure me of his admiration for England, and his earnest desire to be on the most friendly terms with my country.

He was undoubtedly a very clever man. Descended in the direct line from Godfrey Bülow, a member of the feudal nobility of Mecklenburg, who lived in the twelfth century, the Chancellor selected diplomacy as his career like his father before him, who had been Foreign Minister of Prussia. William II raised him to the dignity of a count in 1899 and promoted him to prince in 1905. In his thirty-seventh year—1886—he married an Italian lady of about his own age; she was the daughter of Prince Camporeale, whose house had been very influential at Bologna nearly seven centuries earlier. Very artistic, and at least as clever as her husband, she must have been a great help to him. But the ablest of men like Bülow are sometimes guilty of mistakes which they would probably have avoided had they spent less time in creating a network of intrigues, and more on studying the characteristics of those other nations with which they had to

deal. A striking instance of this will be given in Chapter XII.

The Germans were certainly not happy about the Chinese situation, and its possible repercussions, as the end of 1900 approached. I do not think the expedition had ever been popular. I happened to see some of the Württemberg volunteers entrain at Stuttgart in July, when von Ketteler's assassination was still fresh in everybody's mind, but there was not a trace of enthusiasm, and some of the men evidently regretted their choice.

The official classes were very considerably perturbed ; Germany was not technically at war with the Celestial Empire, and under her law relating to military service troops could not legally be ordered to go abroad if there had been no official declaration of hostilities. Volunteers, therefore, had to be called for as the need arose. In the case of the Boxer expedition the term of service had to be short in order to attract men, and although the total establishment of all ranks amounted only to about 19,000, it became impossible to induce a sufficient number of fresh volunteers to come forward to replace casualties and time-expired soldiers. In fact, it was contemplated changing the law so as to give the Government a free hand, and the Great General Staff at Berlin consulted me about our system. It did not help, and the project was abandoned ; the authorities in fact did not dare, as some of them told me, to present the necessary Bill to the Reichstag. The disinclination to serve in China was as marked among the commissioned as among the non-commissioned ranks, but nobody would, of course, suggest that the Germans are less brave physically than any other nation. They would fight for the Fatherland, but colonial expeditions did not attract them.

To cut a long story short, the main body had soon to be withdrawn, leaving only a few troops behind, as in the case of other Powers, ourselves included. The official way of announcing the fact was that Germany wished to be magnanimous, and release the vanquished from the mailed fist. A very attractive girl, the daughter of a highly-placed Court official, told my wife that the impossibility

of procuring anything like a sufficient number of fresh volunteers on any terms had been almost a staggering blow to the authorities. She was surprised when Mrs. Waters told her that our War Office was always besieged by volunteers whenever there was a chance of service in any part of the world, and remarked that the China expedition was merely a small colonial affair, but that if the Fatherland should be threatened the entire nation would be ready. The general dislike of the whole business was no doubt the reason why the triumphal entry into Berlin, in December, of a portion of the forces which had returned from China did not evoke much enthusiasm. People were gloomy.

The only light touch on the dark canvas at this time was the gift of a thimble by President Kruger to the Queen of Holland, who had been a good friend to him. Some satirists said he should have given a hairpin, which could have been worn on all occasions. This was rather a poor joke.

Christmas was at hand, and the Germans always celebrated this great festival of the year in a striking manner. My wife and I were living in an hotel adjoining the Embassy, having left Frau von Grote's establishment; we had been very comfortable there, but our hours were necessarily too uncertain, which was inconvenient for both sides. We could not rent an apartment while my appointment was still only temporary, and the War Office also showed signs of taking me back into its bosom. My preference was for Berlin, where something interesting was sure to happen occasionally, and one was in the centre of affairs, whereas life in the War Office would certainly be largely taken up with proposed army reforms to which importunate members of Parliament would be sure to add their quotas. The attraction of watching the political chess-board was great, and Berlin was indeed sometimes intensely interesting.

Every household had its Christmas-tree, with presents and crackers for each member of the establishment. Each domestic servant was also given a plate of dessert with a bun, arranged by the mistress herself, and the floral decorations were beautiful. Sometimes there would be

more than one tree ; for instance, Herr von dem Knesebeck, a rather cynical court official and a bachelor, had three, namely his own, one for his servants, and one for his little dog. This last was hung with sausages, and the terrier would sit every morning under it waiting for master to hand him one of the dainties until all were eaten. The observance of Christmas in Germany emphasized the importance which the inhabitants attached to family life.

The Berlin season was in the winter, commencing with the New Year. It was short, but promised to be brilliant. In one respect it was also wearisome, except for those who really enjoyed making a business of pleasure. Every lady, who was anybody in the social world, or who wished to be thought somebody, had her fixed day every week for receiving visitors, and one was expected to attend at least two or three times. The Diplomatic Corps alone numbered about two hundred souls, of whom many were married, and as there are only seven days in one week it is obvious that several receptions were held on the same afternoon. It resulted in a continual dashing in and out if one did one's duty. I must confess that my wife and I were weak mortals, and confined our attentions, after commencing with the very best intentions, to our own friends, who were chiefly Germans. As regards the Embassy it was like a home to us—and was one often in fact ; my wife's letters to England, during the whole of the time which she spent at Berlin from 1900 to 1908, make constant mention of the extraordinary kindness shown to us by Sir Frank Lascelles, his sister, the late Lady Edward Cavendish, and Miss Lascelles, now Lady Spring Rice. It would be impossible to express in words what we owe to them.

Military matters of course took up a fair amount of time, and my relations with the German authorities were always pleasant and straightforward. If a request for information were put before them they would either give this to me promptly or else would say that the matter was secret. They were also open-handed and presented me, from time to time, with samples of their service powder, cartridges, field-glasses—German lenses were the finest in the world—

and other articles of equipment which we would have been very glad to obtain on payment.

The question of training grounds for troops in England had been considerably exercising the minds of our authorities, and as the Germans had recently acquired new areas of this kind I asked them for the details. They had purchased three properties, namely, one for the Guard Corps, one for the IVth Corps, and another for the Vth Corps. Each averaged about eleven thousand acres, and the total cost was about £1,100,000, the annual cost of maintaining the camp buildings being estimated at £9,000 for all three domains.

New Year's Eve, *Silvester Abend*, as the Germans call it, was duly celebrated, and so far as we were aware the next item of interest would be the festivities in commemoration of the bi-centenary of Prussia declaring herself a kingdom.

## CHAPTER VII

AN event happened, however, at the commencement of 1901 which put us all in official mourning for a time. The Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, whose sister had married the Emperor William I, died on January 5, in his eighty-third year; he had been a much-beloved patron of literature and art, and had carried on the great Weimar tradition in these respects. The ambassador, a secretary of embassy, and I, set out to attend the obsequies, which were carried out with the usual pomp.

The Grand Duke was buried in the family vault inside the small church; it was very hot, the building was crammed as full as it would hold, and the smell of the crowd and the masses of flowers was almost overpowering. In fact, one elderly and extremely stout member of the Grand Ducal Court collapsed. He was standing next to me and within a yard or so of the coffin. Suddenly I began to wonder whether my senses were deceiving me: the coffin, smothered with wreaths, seemed to be sinking into the ground! I pinched myself, and discovered that it certainly was beginning to disappear without any external aid apparently. I then happened to look at my portly neighbour, who, streaming with perspiration and seeming very apoplectic, collapsed. The scene was too much for him, and it required several able-bodied men to carry him into the open air. There was, of course, a mechanical arrangement which was worked by somebody out of sight of the congregation, and in view of the immense weight of the coffin the plan was a most sensible one.

The bi-centenary celebrations were not, however, postponed. The Duke of Connaught arrived for them, accompanied by three officers, and was housed in one of the palaces, the bedroom accommodation at the embassy



being, as usual in foreign houses, very limited. Mourning for the Grand Duke of Weimar was still being worn ; this did not, however, matter for men who, if they were not officers, were officials of some description, but it was different for the ladies, and those who belonged to the Court of Berlin added early-Victorian strings of black beads, and jet ornaments of—it is Mrs. Waters's expression—"the grizzliest hideosity." On the great day, however, January 18, mourning was put off.

Perhaps the most interesting of the many ceremonies was the State performance at the Opera ; everything else was very stiff and formal. The wives of naval and military attachés to embassies at the two great military Courts of Berlin and St. Petersburg often had opportunities which were denied to other members of embassies except ambassadors, for they were invited with their husbands to functions like this one. The capacity of the building was quite good, but many German high officials and their wives must have been excluded if every member of the huge diplomatic body had been bidden. My wife had never dreamt that she would be commanded to attend, as she had not yet been presented at Berlin. The card was a very pleasant surprise, and the spectacle itself was gorgeous, as all the men wore uniforms of the most varied and brilliant descriptions, except the representative of the United States, who looked the most distinguished person of all, being as he was in ordinary evening clothes. His successor, Mr. Charlemagne Tower, for some reason of his own, preferred to resemble the other gay birds and invented a diplomatic uniform for himself. It resembled the dazzling creations covered with gold lace which were authorized in European and South American lands. Possibly he bore in mind how the Spaniards had failed in the New World because they had looked with contempt on agriculture and searched only for mineral riches, forgetting that the former is the only durable source of wealth. Whatever his reason was, his full-dress uniform was richly embroidered with wheatears.

Most of us know how difficult it is to distinguish one individual from another after being introduced to perhaps

thirty or forty persons consecutively. This gave my wife much cause for anxious thought ; many are offended if one does not at once remember them and the case this time was of importance. She was desperately afraid lest she might "cut" Frau von Hahnke, the wife of the general who was then the chief of the Emperor's Military Cabinet and, therefore, a very important lady indeed, so she adopted the plan of shaking hands with every likely-looking person. Patience was rewarded at last ; the great lady was always kindness itself, and they became very friendly. Some of these apparent trifles are mentioned because the Boer War had roused such an intense feeling of antagonism in Germany against England.

Social life was very strenuous in Berlin in the middle of January, and two or three parties were scheduled daily and nightly after January 18 until the end of the month. But a terrific blow fell on Saturday, January 19, when we heard that Queen Victoria was dangerously ill ; she had commenced to reign so long before the birth of most of us that her Majesty had been regarded as an enduring institution, but the crisis was evidently at hand, if indeed it had not already arrived. The Emperor, who really was devoted to his *unparalleled grandmamma*, as he called her, wrote to the ambassador in the forenoon of January 19 and announced his intention of starting on that day for England. His Majesty had conceived the idea that some feminine influence was opposed to his forthcoming visit and he mentioned this in his characteristic manner to Sir Frank Lascelles, saying that "those petticoats are at it again ; they want a pair of trousers there !"

The Duke of Connaught accompanied the Kaiser on his journey, and a German cruiser, which met them at Flushing, conveyed them direct to Osborne. They were in time fortunately to see the Queen before her Majesty peacefully breathed her last in the early evening of January 22.

Every social entertainment in Berlin was, of course, cancelled, but the Emperor's decision to remain in England until after the interment aroused a great deal of adverse criticism in his own capital. His birthday is on January 27, and there was plenty of time for him to return for it ;

the occasion was always celebrated with great pomp. The Empress, it was believed, also endeavoured to persuade her Consort to reconsider his resolve, but instead he telegraphed to his Lord Chamberlain, Count zu Eulenburg, to come to England. Berlin society was afraid lest the Emperor, by showing such strong sympathy, should offend Russia ; it was in fact in a state of nerves.

The monarch's visit was indeed a memorable one, for it was then that he publicly proposed the only practical plan which could have preserved peace ; in any case, it must have indefinitely postponed the World Catastrophe, and while there is life there is hope. Instead, Europe was so mangled that she is now a disjointed mass of artificial limbs stumbling along she knows not whither. If the Irishism may be excused, the only thing which keeps her on her legs is the absence of (financial) crutches ; if these were available, fresh mutilations, more horrible than the last, might by now have well-nigh caused the suicide of the West. The Kaiser's project will be described presently.

The King commanded Sir Frank Lascelles and myself to proceed to England for the obsequies. The delegations from the two Prussian cavalry regiments of which his Majesty was the titular chief were to be in my charge, and the Lord Chamberlain arranged for their reception at the Burlington Hotel, which possessed a service of silver plate, produced for our benefit, although it has always seemed to me that to dine off porcelain is pleasanter.

The funeral was fixed for Saturday, February 2, and my party reached London on the previous day. We travelled via Ostend ; in some respects the Calais route would have been more convenient, but it was quite out of the question for German non-commissioned officers and men to travel through France in uniform. No officer or man so dressed may pass through a foreign country without special permission having been previously obtained, and the French Government could not be asked to grant it.

Contradictory orders from various sources awaited me, but they created no difficulties, because the King had also given me his commands, which were that the officers

of the two regiments—Queen Victoria's Dragoons of the Guard and the Blücher Hussars—were to ride in the procession in London immediately behind the royalties, while the non-commissioned officers and men were allotted places in rear of the line of carriages. This was a unique honour, and shows in the most striking manner the King's appreciation of the Kaiser's visit. On the occasion of a great State Procession there are two officers—Gold Stick and Silver Stick are their titles—whose duty it is to ride also directly behind the chief Personages, so the difficulty was solved this time by two Prussian officers completing with those officials a "section" of four riders.

We were to mount our horses at the Royal Mews in Buckingham Palace Road, and, as our hotel was on the north side of Piccadilly, it was desirable for us to get there in ample time, so that we could be marshalled in our proper places at Victoria Station, where the royal train was to arrive with the dead Sovereign and King Edward.

The authorities were nervous lest the pressure of the surging multitudes should cause serious accidents, and some of the streets in the West End had been cleared and closed to traffic from an early hour. The superintendent of the Royal Mews had arranged for carriages for my party to be at the Burlington Hotel by nine o'clock, and our direct route lay along St. James's Street. When half-way down it we were stopped and told to retrace our steps and go round some other way. The crowds would have made this impossible probably in the time at our disposal, and, besides, the Prussians were in full uniform and were obviously official guests.

The Guards officer in command was no doubt afraid that the dense crowd on the pavements would follow our example, and he was not disposed to allow us to proceed. There was no alternative but to produce my orders from the King, and say that if we should be late the reason must be explained to his Majesty. This settled the matter; not only were we permitted to continue our journey, but something was added which sounded rather like an order to continue it to Hell! My sympathy was entirely with the Guardsman, for once the crowd should have begun

to stir, the thin lines of troops must have been carried off their feet, and the street would have been filled with a seething mob, for which the commanding officer would most certainly have been blamed, although quite guiltless.

One of my hussar officers nearly had a nasty accident. The showy sabretache was part of the equipment of German light cavalry, and was worn with very short slings so that it lay on a horse's flank. One of our chargers resented the tickling violently; the stones were wet and slippery, and things looked bad for a moment, so I advised the wearer to remove it and leave it behind, which he did. Otherwise the horse might have got rid of his rider during the march to Paddington Station, and have caused a very bad accident to others in the procession or in the crowd.

The royal train arrived punctually at Victoria Station, and soon after the Procession started a few persons in the crowd thoughtlessly began to cheer Lord Roberts, the national hero and Commander-in-Chief, who was adored by the populace. For a moment it looked as if the cry would be taken up, but he was fortunately able to suppress any further manifestation of affection by pointing his Field-Marshal's baton downwards.

The weather was chilly and damp, but the streets to Paddington were packed with hundreds of thousands of people who had been waiting patiently for many hours. The whole of Hyde Park was one solid mass of silent beings. Heads were bared and a friend of mine there told me afterwards that the crush was such that a man in front of her asked her to remove his hat as he could not raise an arm to do this for himself.

On reaching Paddington those few of us who were to travel in the royal train to Windsor took their seats; numbers of other officers and officials had already gone on and everybody was to walk from the station to St. George's Chapel. A dreadful accident nearly occurred when the gun-carriage bearing the coffin was set in motion. When the Guard of Honour gave the royal salute and the band played the National Anthem, the reverberation in the covered railway station alarmed the gun-team, and

some of the horses plunged violently. The Royal Horse Artillery officer in charge had done his best to keep them warm by moving them about as long as possible, but they had got cold again and the gun-carriage might have been upset; it was an exceedingly anxious moment, and quick decision was imperative. The horses were unhooked and replaced by a party of bluejackets, who hauled the gun-carriage by means of drag-ropes to St. George's Chapel. The spectacle there was intensely imposing.

The coffin was left in the Chapel after the service was over, for removal later to the Mausoleum at Frogmore, and officers stood vigil until this final ceremony had taken place. A nephew of Sir Frank Lascelles, the late Lord John Cavendish, was on this duty nine times. It was a trying one, for the scent of the flowers was almost overpowering, while the officers had to maintain an absolutely rigid attitude; some of them fainted.

The King, Queen Alexandra, and everybody else repaired to the Castle after the service. It was then past four o'clock, and after partaking of refreshments at a buffet the foreign missions and military delegations were presented to his Majesty. The former were introduced by officials of the Foreign Office, while it fell to me to present the Prussian officers. The total number of presentations was very large.

In the ordinary course the visitors would have left London on their return from Windsor, but my officers were very anxious to see something of the metropolis, and the Lord Chamberlain could not entertain them when their official stay was at an end. The only possible chance was for me to ask his Majesty, after they had been presented, whether their visit might be prolonged, and this was a very unusual request to make.

He had had an intensely trying day, having left Osborne at an early hour, and there still remained a number of missions to be introduced after the Germans. It would have been in no way surprising if the King had strongly resented my infringement of etiquette, for he must have been very exhausted after all that he had gone through. He did not, however, show the slightest trace of

annoyance, although the hour was already late, and replied :

“By all means ; make every arrangement for them to stay as long as they wish, and tell the Lord Chamberlain (Lord Clarendon) that I said so.”

His Majesty also expressed his intention of seeing the non-commissioned officers and men as well as the officers before their departure. This was characteristic of King Edward ; he always wanted everybody to be happy. On February 5 I took them all to Windsor, where the Court was in residence, and they laid wreaths at Frogmore, after which the King received them. He decorated each officer and man, with the exception of Colonel von Rauch, who commanded Queen Victoria's Dragoons ; he was already in possession of the highest class of the Royal Victorian Order suitable for his rank, so he was given a very handsome present. When all was over I made my bow, and was withdrawing, when his Majesty called me back, and to my intense surprise handed me the insignia of a Commander of the family Order. This gracious act was the more astonishing as I was at the time only a lieutenant-colonel.

The King and German Emperor then returned to London and we all travelled in the royal train. There was, of course, a Guard of Honour at Windsor Station ; it was formed by the King's company of Grenadier Guards, and I happened to be looking at it when the royal salute was given. One was accustomed to extreme smartness on such occasions, and the Household Brigade has always justly prided itself on its unsurpassable excellence in ceremonial, but the extraordinary dexterity with which the ensign lowered the King's colour was marvellous. The Emperor said he had never seen anything like it before, and was most anxious in consequence to confer a decoration on the artist who had produced such a wonderful effect.

On arriving at Paddington the two commanding officers and I were placed in an open carriage, and formed part of the royal procession to Marlborough House. The weather was decidedly bleak, but there was a great crowd,

although nothing to compare with that of February 2. As far as the reception of the Kaiser was concerned it was superb, and the two Prussian colonels also received a great ovation. We had the great honour of being invited to lunch at Marlborough House, the exact number present being twenty-eight, including the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, the Crown Prince, Lord Salisbury, Lord Roberts, and Sir Frank Lascelles ; there were no ladies. The space was so limited that not all of the King's Household could be accommodated.

After the meal was at an end his Majesty rose to propose the Emperor's health, and to thank him for having changed all his plans in order to be in England, the Germans present straining their ears to catch what was said ; some of them understood English well. In *Secret and Confidential* I quoted part of the Kaiser's speech, but it is desirable to give a fuller report here. King Edward said :

" Sir, I wish to thank you, my nephew, from the bottom of my heart, for your kindness in having come to England at a moment's notice to help me and my family at this sad time. I feel it the more, because I know how much your Majesty must have been inconvenienced by suddenly altering all your arrangements. I assure you, sir, that this is a token of affection which I and the Royal Family will never forget, and I feel I may add that this feeling is one which is heartily shared by my people. You will have noticed the reception accorded to you to-day ; I feel sure that this feeling is reciprocated by the nation ; I thank you, sir, again for your kindness, which cannot fail to influence the world for good.

" I drink to the health of his Majesty, the German Emperor."

The Kaiser, speaking in English, replied :

" I thank you, my dear uncle, heartily for your kind words ; I came to try and comfort you the moment I heard of my beloved grandmamma's illness ; I wished to help and comfort you, and my mother also wished it. I am very proud that you have made me a Field-Marshal in the glorious British Army which has produced so many



distinguished soldiers; the English and German troops have fought together; they have been brothers-in-arms in days gone by, and Wellington was a predecessor of the distinguished Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts. (Here the Emperor turned towards the Commander-in-Chief.)

"I believe there is a Providence which has decreed that two nations which have produced such men as Shakespeare, Schiller, Luther, and Goethe, must have a great future before them; I believe that the two Teutonic nations will, bit by bit, learn to know each other better, and that they will stand together to help in keeping the peace of the world. We ought to form an Anglo-German alliance, you to keep the seas while we would be responsible for the land; with such an alliance not a mouse could stir in Europe without our permission, and the nations would, in time, come to see the necessity of reducing their armaments.

"Once more, my dear uncle, I thank you most heartily, and drink to your health."

The report of what was said, which appeared in the *Court Circular* on the following morning, was, as Sir Frank Lascelles stated, a poor affair. A *précis* had been hurriedly compiled at Windsor by various hands before the newspapers should have gone to press, and the proposal for an alliance was not mentioned in it.

It will be convenient, perhaps, to revert now to what is termed the Cowes interview of 1895, and also to anticipate somewhat the future, as regards this question of an Anglo-German alliance, in order to bring the matter under one head.

In the autumn of 1920 Baron von Eckhardstein, Counsellor of the German Embassy in London in 1895, and for a long time *Chargé d'Affaires* there owing to the illness of Count Hatzfeldt, the ambassador, published a volume of *Memoirs* which attracted a great deal of attention in England. It showed apparently that we were, until 1901, never so near committing ourselves to an Anglo-German alliance as during the period covered by the famous Kruger telegram and the violent outbreaks of Anglo-phobia in Germany. It was also curious to read in

Eckhardstein's book that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain had once been one of the leading statesmen who worked for an alliance, and had earned the admiration of the German Emperor, who expressed more than once a very different opinion to me about him six years afterwards. An account of his Majesty's later views will be given in Chapter X, so far as they relate to the former Colonial Secretary.

The Emperor met Lord Salisbury at Cowes in 1895, just after that illustrious man had again become Prime Minister, and Eckhardstein stated that the latter proposed a scheme by which England, Germany, and Austria should arrange for the ultimate partition—or what amounted to the same thing—of Turkey between those three Powers. Nothing, of course, was published at the time about what passed when the two met at Cowes, but it was no secret that the Emperor was in a very bad temper immediately afterwards. He was opposed apparently altogether to the idea.

In the autumn of 1901 the Chancellor, Bülow, so Lascelles told me, showed an individual, whose word nobody could doubt, the official dispatches of 1895—when the Emperor had been in England—from the German ambassador in London. They showed that Lord Salisbury had then proposed something in the nature of a partition of the Ottoman Empire, but the Kaiser refused absolutely to entertain the project. He wished to see the Prime Minister again after the latter had had an audience of Queen Victoria, but Lord Salisbury made some excuse and returned to London, which made the Emperor very angry.

This was the time when William II wished England to promise some material assistance to Italy in the Red Sea. According to Hatzfeldt, Lord Salisbury had agreed to do this up to a certain point, but when the problem became acute soon afterwards the Prime Minister denied ever having said anything of the kind as stated by the German ambassador to his Government, and was reported to have said: "What liars all these foreign diplomatists are!"

There is therefore a direct conflict of evidence. Could Hatzfeldt have dreamt what he reported secretly to Bülow? The latter was not likely to have shown forged documents to his friend in the autumn of 1901; it would indeed have been impossible in the circumstances to have concocted fraudulent ones. It is unfortunate that the promised series of Foreign Office papers is to commence only with the year 1898, so that people must judge for themselves where the truth lies.

The Emperor and Lord Salisbury may have misunderstood each other, and if the latter did not on this occasion make a general charge against all foreign diplomatists he once accused an individual one of lying. When I was military attaché at St. Petersburg in the nineties, M. Metaxas was the Grecian representative in London, and it came to my knowledge that he had said Lord Salisbury had led him to believe that England might help Greece in a war with Turkey. When the late Lord Sanderson received this report from me he showed my letter to his chief, who remarked, "What a liar Metaxas must be!"

When Bülow produced Hatzfeldt's dispatches of 1895 relating to the Cowes interview he said that an Anglo-German alliance—which he wished should include the whole Triple Alliance—was out of the question so long as Lord Salisbury remained in power, and it appeared that the famous Kruger telegram, at the time of the Jameson Raid, was the direct outcome of the Kaiser's anger with Lord Salisbury after his visit to Cowes.

The German Emperor's proposal of February 5 for an alliance was not the first step which he had taken in this direction. It will surprise many people to learn that he meant to give us Germany's armed support in 1898 if France and Russia had declared war against us after the Fashoda incident. One may say that this would have been in his own interests, but it certainly would have been in ours, and one cannot expect to get something for nothing. Proposals for a conditional and in the first instance short term (five years) agreement were made, and the Emperor thought at one time that the matter was definitely settled, so Sir Frank Lascelles told me in 1901.

Some negotiations for an alliance were carried on after the Kaiser's speech at Marlborough House, but they never seemed likely to materialize. Lord Salisbury was not enamoured of the project, and the late Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, did not meet Eckhardstein's hints half-way. Possibly he foresaw circumstances, hypothetical perhaps at the moment, where an alliance might hamper our freedom of action, and would therefore be disadvantageous. The German idea was to conclude an agreement for a period of five years as an experiment. If France or Russia should attack England, or if Russia should fall on Germany, the second party to the alliance should remain neutral. If, however, both of them should make a combined onslaught on one of the other two Powers, then England and Germany would support each other. It was certain that France alone would not attack the latter.

Lord Lansdowne had to be cautious. Before William II succeeded his father, in 1888, he had resented, as he wrote to the Emperor Alexander III of Russia,<sup>1</sup> being taught, as he believed, to see things through the eyes of his English relations, and early in his reign he had been very impulsive in political matters; in fact, he was indeed frequently inclined to be hasty, and the English Court may have heard of the Kaiser's letters from St. Petersburg.

A British Foreign Secretary had therefore to consider whether, in the event of an Anglo-German alliance, the Emperor might not, unintentionally perhaps, create a situation which would involve us in an otherwise avoidable war, or, being at war, whether he might not withdraw from it leaving England to shoulder the burden. The same argument applies, however, to any alliance; it was Russia's mobilization in 1914 which rendered the catastrophe inevitable, and drew us into it; Sazonov had reckoned rightly that he was betting on a certainty. In the case of an Anglo-German alliance, on the other hand, both the Governments wanted peace, which was not the

<sup>1</sup> The letter, dated May 25, 1884, is preserved in the Archives at Moscow.

ultimate aim of the Franco-Russian alliance ; the evidence on this point is available for everybody.

The Emperor did not abandon his 1901 project for some time. On May 29 of that year he told me, as shall be related in the following chapter, that we should have to join one side or the other, and at that time he apparently thought it would be better for peace if we went over to the Franco-Russian camp rather than hold aloof altogether. In June, however, Sir Frank Lascelles told me, as a great secret not then known to the embassy staff, that his Majesty was anxious for an alliance with England such that if either should be attacked by another Power or Powers, the other would support its ally in every possible manner. Nothing came of the proposal, and Bülow's insulting falsehoods, uttered six months later, in January 1902, finally extinguished any possible chance of an agreement being reached. This subject shall be referred to again in Chapter XII, but it should be noted that the proposal was only to take effect if either England or Germany should be attacked, and not if one of them should be the aggressor. It is inconceivable that any combination of hostile Powers should have ventured to challenge such a mighty federation whose object would have been a peaceful one. Looking back on all that has occurred, it seems that human nature is not yet ripe for the peaceful settlement of national disputes.

While the conversations of 1901 were in progress somebody told the Emperor that Mr. Arthur (now Lord) Balfour had asked a lady at a dinner party : " But can we trust the Emperor ? " His Majesty told the ambassador and myself that, considering all he had done to help England, this was " an insult." Further inquiry showed that Mr. Balfour had been unjustly accused ; he was said to have been mistaken for Lord Balfour of Burleigh, but still the cap did not fit. Subsequent investigation made it appear that the offending words had never been uttered at all. They were merely the figment of somebody's imagination. I do not know who the Emperor's informant was, but Baron von Eckhardstein was generally reputed to be the author, and I think he was rather a diplomatic

mischief-maker at times. King Edward said that the Kaiser "should not listen to gossip"!

The criticism has sometimes been made that the Emperor was not sincere on February 5, and that he would have built a powerful fleet secretly. Putting aside the question of sincerity, it was common knowledge that trade in Germany had been bad for a long time; money for a fleet was therefore difficult to procure, and the army had to be maintained in the most efficient state possible, but here again scarcity of money caused long delays in improvements. It was obviously in Germany's best interests that an alliance should be concluded with England.

There is another point, namely, that it would have been absolutely impossible to construct a number of powerful warships without the fact becoming known; they could not have been hidden. Moreover, even if such a plot could have been put into execution, new naval bases must have been created, or, at the very least, existing ones must have been greatly enlarged. In neither case could the secret have been kept. No human being could have produced them by a stamp of the foot.

One of the Kaiser's sharpest critics as regards political matters, who knew him intimately for a quarter of a century—they were boys together—namely, Mr. Poultney Bigelow, the highly distinguished American author, has placed his opinion on record. He has written that the sole practical suggestion for maintaining peace in Europe, which was made during the first thirteen years of the twentieth century, was the one put forward by William II at Marlborough House on February 5, 1901.

For some of us it is tempting to theorize about what might have resulted if the alliance had materialized instead of coming to naught, but "the ample proposition that Hope makes in all designs begun on earth below fails in the promised largeness: checks and disasters grow in the veins of actions highest rear'd, as knots, by the conflux of meeting sap, infect the sound pine and divert his grain tortive and errant from his course of growth." Unmanageable human forces, unseen, might have torn the stoutest bonds asunder.

There are only two alternatives. Either the Emperor was sincere or he was not. The evidence that he was sincere is that to my personal knowledge he made many attempts to get our military machine organized on an efficient basis for service in the field—in other words, he wished our army to become much more powerful than it actually was. If he should have begun to create a powerful fleet, then we could have increased our own. If, on the other hand, he left us to watch the seas, then we should have had that holiday in naval construction which we—by far the wealthiest of the two countries—vainly endeavoured to procure not long afterwards.

The other alternative is that the Kaiser was playing, or trying to play, a gigantic game of bluff. He was certainly in the habit of calling some of our Ministers “unmitigated noodles,” and if this and similar expressions represented his opinion without exaggeration, he may have thought that by offering them good advice occasionally they would refuse to follow it. This is, however, unlikely, for what object could he have had in often exposing himself to the harsh criticisms of his own people, who frequently said that he gave too much consideration to British interests?

Criticism would have been far more severe if the Germans had been aware of the Kaiser's numerous efforts to get our land forces greatly strengthened. My conviction is that he was sincere, for in no other way could Germany's interests, namely, peace and commercial development, have been so effectively furthered as by a close union with England. The subject should, I think, be considered as one entirely unaffected by sentiment or personal prejudice.

I remained in England for a few days after the Kaiser's departure on February 5, as there were several things to be seen to in connexion with his Majesty's visit, so I do not know what was said in the German Press about it, or about the mild version of his speech which appeared in the *Court Circular*. When I returned to Berlin the matter was never mentioned to me in conversation, nor did I see any allusion to it in the German newspapers.

If the Germans had known what had been said at Marlborough House on February 5 my impression is that

there would have been a violent revulsion of feeling in our favour. The state of nervous tension existing in the Fatherland would, I think, have disappeared, and bitterness of feeling with it, for after all each of us wanted peace, and we were the only two Powers which in combination could actually enforce it.

I met the late Colonel Repington at Brussels, where he was military attaché, soon after the Kaiser's visit to London in February. He detested the Germans, and this state of mind caused him—as it did a good many others—to underestimate their power. He was, he told me, convinced that war would break out one day between the two countries, “perhaps not for a hundred years,” but it was sure to happen because “when a foreign nation becomes too prosperous in trade we always go for it.” He was a fair exponent of the frame of mind of several influential people, but just then commerce in Germany was in a decidedly bad way.

His school was prepared to destroy innumerable lives, and to spend milliards, on the chance of eventually getting millions. If modern statesmen had to imitate their forerunners, and lead their countrymen in battle, one might confidently reckon on extreme caution being observed before nations are committed to the arbitrament of the real, and not the paper, sword which some statesmen are occasionally fond of flourishing; they would probably have to pass some physical test on appointment to Cabinet rank, and be examined periodically.

The day may indeed come when none but the actual makers of treaties, together of course with the other members of their respective Governments, shall be permitted to represent their countries in the field, and the revival of knightly tournaments for this purpose would be an enormous attraction for the general public everywhere. It would also be vastly profitable for the statesmen concerned—or, at any rate, for their heirs—as the film rights alone would be of immense value, and enterprising American moving-picture magnates should beyond a doubt offer irresistible terms for staging the tourneys in their sun-kissed land. As regards the difficulty of preventing



cheating or, as Uncle Sam terms it, "double-crossing," two factors should obviate this: the fear of Judge Lynch, on the one hand, and the huge sum furnished by the winner's share of the gate-money; even to-day a pugilist may earn £200,000 at least, in a few minutes. The idea is worth consideration!

In this connexion may be mentioned the remarkable experience of a diplomatist. Baron von Richthofen, the German Foreign Minister, had ridden in his younger days as a trooper in von Bredow's celebrated charge on August 16, 1870, when the half-dozen squadrons composing it attacked enormously superior numbers of the enemy; they gained their object, but lost nearly half their strength in the process. Richthofen had therefore first-hand knowledge of the horrors of war, which he detested, and I suppose he is the only instance of a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs who has had personal acquaintance with the terrible result of secret diplomacy. One of the commanding officers on that occasion, when he received the order to advance, left the field; a survivor of the charge told me this.

There may be some kink in my brain which prevents me from seeing political subjects in their proper perspective. I never could understand why European statesmen should have involved their countries in such intricate mazes that a petty, semi-civilized principality could be the arbiter between peace and war; it looks as if they were so engrossed in their daily intrigues that they could not see the wood for the trees. They do not, as a rule, want war, but their schemings evolved a Balance of Power so delicately poised that a beggar on horseback by a push of his finger could topple it over, and send Europe to the devil.

The efforts of the Great Powers to use the Balkan States as pawns in their intrigues were the real foundation for the influence of the latter, but, so far as England is concerned, what on earth can it possibly matter to us how Balkan territory is divided? Ports now belonging to one of these principalities might, it is said, fall into the hands of a rival, even a great, big rival. What can this matter to England? A commercial treaty with one European

Power is very much like that with any other ; tariffs differ, it is true, but there is usually the most-favoured-nation clause. Even if this were absent, the countries in question are compelled to purchase immense quantities in the aggregate of raw materials from us which would give us a tremendous lever. But we are still greatly exercised about possibilities of the kind mentioned ; at least our authorities appear to be uneasy. One thing is certain, namely, that the people of England now living or growing up will never wage war unless they are satisfied that their existence is directly threatened. They will wait and see how new parcellings in Europe actually affect them, and it will not be too late then to interfere if desirable. Meanwhile, we had much better develop our own boundless resources which are so inexplicably neglected.

When the attempt was made to rush the country into war against Turkey in 1922 I asked a young man, a reservist, how he relished the prospect ; he had been dangerously wounded twice in France, but had completely recovered. He replied that he supposed he would have to go, and added : " There will be three of us." This surprised me, as I had always thought he had no brothers, but he explained that the other two men would be those who came to drag him back to the colours. He had been decorated for bravery in the field. In fact it was notorious that great numbers of men, when warned that they might have to rejoin the ranks, had no intention of obeying the order if it should be issued. A proportion of them even took the trouble to write and say they would refuse. We had therefore better leave the continental Powers to settle their own quarrels.

The reader may naturally think that my legitimate duties as military attaché to the greatest military Power in the world must have been almost entirely neglected ; they have scarcely been mentioned, for their recital would interest nobody, but the succeeding chapter shall contain a few remarks on military matters, oases in a wilderness of small-talk.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE German Army Estimates for 1901 took some little time to digest, for they made a large volume of more than eight hundred quarto pages. There were no abnormal changes in them, except in one particular, which ultimately had the most far-reaching effects. This was the decision to introduce machine guns. We had been the pioneers in this direction, and it was naturally gratifying *at the time* to know that our lead was for once being followed, although at first in a modest manner.

Two machine guns were allotted to a British battalion, whereas a German army corps was to have only six. For financial reasons the first batch of these new detachments, as they were termed, was to be five in number, while, in order not to exceed the establishment laid down by the law of 1899, the strength of four battalions was to be reduced by twenty men each. In our army the machine guns belonged to their respective battalions, and we adhered to this system until cruel experience in the Great War forced us to modify it as the Germans had already done before 1914.

Their reasoning was perfectly sound : if advantage were taken of ground features these weapons could inflict terrible damage, but battalions might and often did find themselves in such tactical positions that their machine guns could not be used effectively ; sometimes indeed they were annihilated immediately. The Germans therefore had set themselves to study the art—for it is an art—of adapting the tactics of their new arm to the features of the ground. The whole world knows of their extraordinary success in this field ; by massing machine guns and placing them in carefully concealed positions, each flanking another, they effected some economy in man

power while causing terrific losses to the enemy. Within thirteen years of the appearance of the first-born, the German army was magnificently equipped with these devastating engines of warfare.

At the commencement of the year 1901 the War Office in London had begun to consider the question of the Laws and Customs of War. Vile and utterly false charges had been levelled on the Continent everywhere against our troops in South Africa, and force was added to the allegations because that mild-mannered and tender-hearted gentleman, and, later, Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, had asked the question : " When is a war not a war ? " and had answered it himself by saying : " When it is carried on by methods of barbarism." This unhappy monologue is a model of the abyss into which a statesman, driven by party feeling, may plunge headlong, dragging down a mass of innocents with him.

There was a dearth of literature in Germany as well as elsewhere on the Laws and Customs of War ; it included, however, one official German work entitled *A Compendium of Martial Law*. It had been published in the year 1900, and perhaps the most interesting statement in it was that " a foreigner or a German who, in foreign territory occupied by German troops, behaves towards German troops or their belongings contrary to German law is to be punished as if his offence had been committed within the German Empire." A German pillager was liable to the death penalty, and there were instances in the Great War where it was inflicted.

Major (afterwards General) von Prittwitz had also published a pamphlet on the subject in 1884. In it, writing about the celebrated partisan leader and national hero, Schill, he said : " While we must always honour Schill and his officers as martyrs in the cause of national independence, and while it is not for us, considering their duties were so conflicting, to judge them, it must be admitted that Napoleon did not contravene the laws of nations when he had Schill's officers shot at Wesel in 1809." Prittwitz's point was that " no citizen may carry on war on his own account and without having

been duly authorized to do so by the Commander-in-Chief."

The whole subject of international law in war time gave rise to a great deal of academic discussion. Germany had ratified the Hague Convention regarding the laws and customs of war before 1901, but as this ratification was not announced officially, the German Government did not promulgate any rules in accordance with the Convention. During the Great War, of course, national emergencies took precedence of all custom and regulations, and our treatment of neutral countries, especially the United States, gave rise to some exceedingly difficult problems. That great Republic, however, outstripped our activities once it had entered into the struggle.

If the Board of Admiralty was aware of the project for an Anglo-German alliance it evidently did not favour it, for Captain Ewart, the naval attaché, was instructed not to accept any invitation to attend German naval manœuvres, and in no circumstances was he to ask for one; otherwise the German naval attaché could not be refused permission to attend ours, and the Admiralty thought this would be dangerous. Not long afterwards one of our most distinguished admirals saw something of German warships, their equipment, and dockyard installations, and he wrote to my wife that there was not much of a fleet as regards numbers, but "what there is, is horribly good." Ewart also told me that the German dockyards were far better equipped than our own, while, in the Great War, the German battle cruisers at the battle of Jutland had stronger armour than our ships, and for some reason their gunnery was more effective.

Another attempt to assassinate the Kaiser was made at Bremen in March, and shortly afterwards his Majesty received the President of the Chamber of Deputies, who came to congratulate him on his escape. In his reply the Emperor said: "The youth of the country is demoralized; all classes of society bear the blame for what has happened." This remark caused a great deal of heart-burning in Berlin.

He also irritated the Germans by conferring his highest Order, the Black Eagle, on Lord Roberts; only two

Englishmen had previously received it, namely, the Duke of Wellington and a former Lord Breadalbane who had come on a mission to the old Emperor William I. In Frederick the Great's time the Star was made of some leathery substance as a sign of the poverty of the country, and in order to teach people not to value distinctions for their actual cost. Prince Blücher of Wahlstatt (the Waterloo hero) had the leather one.

General Sir John Ardagh, the Director of Military Intelligence at the War Office, was succeeded early in the year by the late Sir William (afterwards Field-Marshal Lord) Nicholson. Ardagh was one of the ablest men I have ever known, but his services were never adequately recognized. Nicholson had also great capacity and became Lord Haldane's right-hand man, when the latter was Secretary of State for War ; his temperament was entirely different from that of Ardagh, but I always found both these distinguished generals splendid to work with.

At the beginning of March a stroke of good fortune came my way in the form of promotion to the rank of substantive colonel in the army, whereas in the ordinary course I should only have been a very junior lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Artillery. One of the army reforms undertaken towards the end of 1900 was that of officers' dress, and these constant changes were very costly for the commissioned ranks. There was an officer at the War Office whose duty it was to concern himself with these matters, and I suppose he felt obliged to justify his official existence lest his post should be abolished.

My new rank entailed some changes in my uniform, and this time one of them was the number of buttons on the recently devised undress frock-coat. Should it have one button more or one button less ? The problem was evidently a very difficult one, because orders and counter-orders were issued on the subject. This meant, of course, that unless the coat were quite new an officer would have to purchase another, and there was no change out of a ten-pound note. In Germany a similar article of quite as good quality cost only four pounds ten shillings, but British army tailors were a powerful body.

I had written to inquire whether a final decision had been reached, but neither this letter nor a reminder had been answered. Being in England I thought it well to penetrate into the sanctum of the late Major-General Vetch, a very handsome man, as befitted his appointment. There was no response to my knock on the door, so I turned the handle and walked in without attracting any notice. The gallant general was posturing in front of a huge cheval-glass, garbed in a long flowing cloak with an enormous hat of ultra-Boer pattern on his head; two satellites, one on each side, were arranging the folds of the cloak so as to make them fall gracefully to the ground. It was a picture of a perfect stage brigand. When Vetch turned round at last and perceived me, I smiled, but he wore a very serious expression; evidently there was something not quite right about his costume. He saw the force of my argument about the one button, and hoped the question would be settled soon; he explained why my letters had not been answered: he had been unable to make up his mind! He took advantage of our interview to suggest that perhaps I could get the Ministry of War in Berlin to make us a present of a set of officers' uniforms. Perhaps it would have done so, for it was very liberal in such matters, but the idea of putting forward the request did not appeal to me.

It was in March, after my return from England, that I met the late Professor Renvers, for the first time, at a dinner party. He was the Empress Frederick's physician and was a man as delightful in conversation as he was skilled in his profession. He told me that he had been a student in England in 1875 and wished to settle in this country, but his father said that he ought to give his own land the benefit of his talents. At the time when I first met Renvers he was not yet fifty, I think, and he remarked that Germany had learnt hygiene, water supply, and hospital management, from Britain in the first instance, but he added that in 1901 she was already far ahead of her teacher. I am not so sure; bathrooms and lavatories in many good houses ventilated into larders, for instance.

Renvers, while regarding Morell Mackenzie as a decidedly skilful operator, was positive that he must have known that the Emperor Frederick was suffering from cancer when the German medical men first diagnosed it. Berlin gossip said that William II wished to prevent his father's accession to the throne on the ground that the Hohenzollern family statutes debarred any of its members from reigning if stricken with a mortal illness, and that the Empress Frederick ranged herself on Mackenzie's side in order to foil her son's project.

The cheapness of German field-glasses as compared with English ones was striking, and I went into the matter with Herr Goerz, who was unsurpassed if not unequalled in this line. The advantage which his glasses then possessed over any other similar article was that a fall did not disarrange the lenses in the former, whereas it did do so in the latter. I got a pair of Goerz binoculars, and still have them; the price to officers in Germany was four pounds fifteen shillings, as against the usual retail figure of eight pounds. Goerz said that the lower figure left him quite sufficient profit, and that he was desirous of letting British officers buy at the cheaper rate, but there was a ring in this country which made this practically impossible. There was no duty on optical instruments in those days in England, so that our manufacturers must now be reaping huge profits with the import duty of one-third of the value. It has always struck me as odd that even in these days of protective tariffs the minimum tax here is so outrageously high. Wages certainly cannot account for more than a small fraction of such an excessive duty, which causes many people to avoid buying things which they would otherwise purchase. Many British manufacturers are remarkably stubborn and short-sighted, as their successors at any rate will discover to their cost.

A curious incident occurred in March. King Edward sent the insignia of the Grand Cross of the Bath (military division) to the Prince Regent of Bavaria; I met him once or twice, and found him very interesting to talk to. The honour was conferred on the occasion of his Royal Highness's eightieth birthday—he declined the decoration



in those countries, and my predecessor, Colonel Grierson, himself a very able artilleryman, had gone into the question with a view to purchasing some guns for our own use ; it was due to his sound judgment that the War Office bought about a hundred very good ones.

At that time France was, I believe, in advance of Germany in the matter of field artillery ; but this was due, in my opinion, to the fact that money for military purposes was voted on a relatively less lavish scale in the latter than in the former country, although the Germans made it go much further than their neighbours did. In 1914 and later, as we all know only too well, they astounded the world with their artillery products.

Lord Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief, had also begun his illustrious career as an artillery officer ; he was greatly interested in the question of quick-firing field-guns, and my investigations brought incidentally to light the fact that the great Krupp had special privileges which enabled him to crush competition in Germany ; in other words, he charged the German Government prices which seemed unduly high. There was no secret about this ; the Emperor spoke to me about it, but no objection was raised—except in the Reichstag—partly because the firm had such huge manufacturing resources, and partly because of another less weighty reason. This was sentiment, which one would not have expected to find in German official life. Krupp had caused the adoption of breech-loading artillery, and the German Army was so enormously indebted to its great superiority over the muzzle-loader that the obligation ranked as an important asset, namely, goodwill.

The universal law of change had led by degrees to the evolution of the quick-firing field-gun. It had been introduced into the German Army in 1896, after experiments which lasted for five years, and by the year 1900 a competitor to Krupp had sprung up. This was the extremely clever inventor, Herr Ehrhardt, who was anxious to effect a deal with us ; we wanted some more quick-firers for South Africa. In March I was present at some of his experiments, which were very successful, but his financial resources were then too small.

Soon afterwards I was dining with the Emperor and Empress and had a prolonged conversation with his Majesty when we covered all the ground. He had all details at his fingers' ends. I inquired whether Krupp would be permitted to sell us some guns, and he replied that this could not be sanctioned so long as the Boer War continued. Krupp's, he said, although a purely private business with which the owner was free to do as he liked, always made it a rule to ask if there was any official objection to any particular course being adopted. He felt, said the Emperor, that he was under great obligations to the German Government. For instance, if Krupp asked for the loan of any specially qualified officers, the Kaiser told me that the request was invariably granted. This placed him, therefore, in a semi-official position, and besides he expended on research and experiments sums which no Government could dream of spending, and which, as his Majesty pointed out, largely counterbalanced his big profits on war material.

It would weary the reader to discuss the various continental quick-firing systems, each of which had its advantages and disadvantages; there is no finality in such matters. Our War Office was very much behind the times, but this was not the fault of the very able members of the Ordnance Committee; men like Brackenbury, Desmond O'Callaghan, and others, could hold their own anywhere, but Parliament had not voted sufficient money for research. When the financial obstacle vanished, the products of our arsenals were not to be surpassed anywhere.

I was invited to lunch at Potsdam on May 27, and was talking to my neighbour when my back was soundly thumped. It appeared that a servant had failed to attract my attention in any other manner, and that the Kaiser wished to drink wine with me. To lay hands on an officer in uniform in Germany was an unforgivable offence, so I concluded that the footman must have been suffering from an acute attack of Anglophobia, and had adopted this method of showing it.

Standing up, of course, to acknowledge the compliment, I remarked on the delicious quality of the Moselle in my

glass, whereupon his Majesty replied that he still had a few bottles of something even finer. As I was somewhat sceptical about this, my imperial host ordered one to be produced. Moselle such as can be had only in Germany is one of my two favourite wines, and that from the Emperor's cellars was always first-rate, but this special bottle—I drank most of it—was unparalleled in my experience. Moselle seldom keeps its quality for many years, but this particular vintage was unusually old. Less than a dozen bottles remained, I was told, and the lucky incident recalled another somewhat similar one. The Kaiser had often endeavoured to induce Bismarck to forgive him for having dismissed him from the Chancellorship, but his illustrious subject had rejected all attempts at reconciliation. The Emperor, knowing that he was fond of good liquor, at last sent him by special messenger a bottle of extremely rare wine, one of three, I believe, and this tactful gift really seemed to soften the old man's heart.

Herbert Bismarck, his son, was very good company to meet, but he was a bitter hater. He had been in Queen Victoria's Dragoons of the Guard, and was entitled to wear the uniform after retirement, but when his father had to abandon office his son always thereafter wore plain clothes even when lunching or dining with his old regiment; he told me he would never forgive the Emperor.

His Majesty had a humorous side to his character. When Count (afterwards Prince) Bülow took up his residence in the Chancellor's palace William II called upon his wife soon afterwards. She had a very biting tongue at times, and I do not know whether some criticism of hers about him had been carried back to his Majesty, or whether his act was intended to rebuff a broad hint. Countess Bülow complained about the dirty state of the palace and said it required a great deal to be spent on it. The Sovereign not only sympathized with her, but promised to render material assistance. She was therefore delighted a day or two later when a large packing case arrived from his Majesty, who invited himself to dinner on the same evening. The case had not been opened, as his hostess was immersed in the preparations for her exalted guest,

who insisted that the great box should be produced and the lid removed in his presence. When the contents had been laid bare they were found to consist entirely of bars of soap !

The presence of a French military mission at the manœuvres in 1900 had naturally evoked a good deal of comment, but this event was eclipsed by another at the end of May 1901, which was also caused by the Emperor's desire to effect, if possible, a better understanding with France, so his Majesty had invited a French delegation to attend a field day of the Berlin garrison.

Two French officers, General Bonnal and Lieutenant-Colonel Gallet, had arrived for the occasion, and the exercises took place on the usual drill ground, the Tempelhofer Feld. When they were finished, the Kaiser, in accordance with his custom, marched through the Friedrich Strasse, about as long as Oxford Street, at the head of a regiment stationed in the capital, the 2nd regiment of Foot Guards, and the two visitors accompanied his Majesty. Bonnal had been wounded in the Franco-German War, and was taken prisoner.

We all lunched with the Emperor Alexander's Grenadiers of the Guard, and soon after we had sat down the Kaiser drank to the health of the Brigade to which the 2nd Guard regiment belonged. His father had commanded the brigade. After the toast had been honoured the Emperor would normally have sat down again before proposing another one, but instead of doing this he told the company to fill their glasses and began his speech.

He said that he had proposed to the other Powers that the time had come when the Headquarter allied staff with Count Waldersee might be broken up, and the German Expeditionary Force withdrawn from China. Continuing, he announced that the Emperor of Russia, in agreeing to the proposal, had himself written a telegram declaring that Waldersee was deserving of the greatest gratitude for the skilful manner in which he had fulfilled a "thankless task." Waldersee had arrived after the relief of the legations and was fully occupied in trying to exert a nominal control.

The Kaiser then went on to say that the German troops in China had done their duty admirably and were most friendly with the other contingents, "but of all the troops in China none were better than the French, who possessed every military virtue, and with whom the Germans had stood shoulder to shoulder not only in camp but also in victorious exploits in the field.

"I am glad that we have here to-day two representatives of the gallant French Army, and I raise my glass to the health of the brave French Army and its representative here, General Bonnal."

The Emperor had spoken in German in order that his officers might understand his words, and then Bonnal, who was seated on his Majesty's left hand, rose and replied very briefly. He said that he had been greatly "interested" in the Emperor's remarks, and in thanking him for the expressions which he had used begged to be permitted to drink to his Majesty's health. Bonnal made the very best of a delicate situation.

After luncheon was over the Kaiser came and spoke to me. He began by asking whether I had paid attention to his speech, and I assured him that it would be repeated practically word for word to the ambassador for transmission to London.

On this occasion our new system of army corps was one of the topics; a similar plan had been authorized in the seventies, based theoretically on the German lines, but it never got further than the headings in the Army List, and had long since been dropped. This time we were to have the real thing, but the Emperor criticized the scheme adversely on the perfectly true ground that voluntary recruiting would never procure the number of men required, the cost being one insurmountable obstacle; moreover, another great impediment seemed to have been overlooked: we always had difficulty in finding sufficient reliefs for the British troops in India and elsewhere abroad, whereas Germany had only her home fronts to look to, and conscripted her men territorially.

The Emperor, on the other hand, recognizing that public opinion in England would never accept compulsory

service in time of peace, had a far better plan. This was to take our auxiliary forces, as they were termed—that is to say the militia, the volunteers, and the yeomanry—in hand, and form them into brigades and divisions in the same way as for the regular army. The utterly inefficient organization of these auxiliary troops was common knowledge; they had the numbers, clothing, and rifles, but nothing else; there was not a field-gun between them, I believe.

Both before and after this interview the Emperor had spoken to me on the subject several times, his desire being that our land forces should be so organized in peace time as to be capable of rapid expansion in war to any extent that might be necessary. His views seemed to be so eminently sound that they were regularly reported by me to London, and Sir William Nicholson discussed them with me from time to time, recognizing their value.

Nothing happened, however, until the Liberals swept the country at the end of 1905, and the new Secretary of State for War, Mr. (now Lord) Haldane, set to work promptly. Nicholson had been flung on the rubbish-heap when the Army Council was born in 1904, but he was a friend of Mr. Haldane's, who removed another officer from the War Office in order to bring Nicholson into it as Quartermaster-General, a post which he abandoned shortly afterwards in order to mount higher as Chief of the General Staff.

The Territorial Army came into being in 1906 on the lines suggested by the Kaiser some years earlier. Where should we have been without it in 1914? Our military experts could have got the total numbers required in 1906 easily enough, but they were obsessed with the idea that it took two years to train a regular soldier, and four for a territorial, whereas the event proved, as I had been bold enough to tell the War Office in 1905, that three months would suffice. The quick intelligence of our people convinced me that a very short period would turn them into efficient soldiers, but a sufficient number will not join for so long a time as four years, and there is room here for greater efficiency to be combined with economy.

The reception given by some professional soldiers to the Territorial Army was decidedly lukewarm until war proved its enormous value, but then their varied service all over the world did not give them many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the wage-earning classes of society.

The outstanding fact about the origin of the Territorial Army is that the plan was the Kaiser's and nobody else's, so that there was at any rate one German who, during and after the war in South Africa, wished us to become militarily stronger instead of weaker.

To return to my conversation with him on May 29, 1901, some remark of mine about the presence of the French guests in Berlin led the Emperor to make a pronouncement of greater immediate importance, for he said :

“Your policy of isolation will no longer do ; you will no longer be able to stir up strife among the nations on the continent. You heard what I said at luncheon, and the continental nations mean to work in peace, and *you* (he stressed the word) will not be able to prevent us doing so. You will have to join one side or the other.”

Things were tending in that direction ; the unseen forces were to prove themselves stronger than the visible ones. France and Russia had hitherto been and still were our potential enemies, and it seemed most unlikely that we should all three soon be allies in fact. But the growing development of Germany, in spite of her momentarily bad state of trade, was ere long to induce the British Government to thwart her in every possible manner, and this could only be done by effecting an alliance in fact if not in name with the two great enemies of the Triple Alliance. Possibly the Kaiser's words may have sown the seed whence grew the Triple Entente.

After his remark about our isolation the Emperor said that some people in England rested their hopes for the future on the United States, but he declared that they were less anti-German than hostile to Britain.

In agreeing that we were isolated I expressed the hope that we should remain so, unless an Anglo-German alliance,

which seemed to me then and afterwards the only guarantee for peace, should materialize. I said that England was viewed with jealous eyes by the whole of Europe, for she owned vast dominions all over the world which would eventually develop into great nations, and even the United States were sending emigrants and great sums of money to Canada ; most of the best coaling stations overseas, I said, belonged to us.

While the Emperor was naturally most desirous of having a good understanding with France, my acquaintance with that gallant if emotional nation made me think his wish was impossible of fulfilment, but his Majesty seemed hopeful. In fact, the French ambassador in London told his Russian colleague—who reported it on January 28/February 10, 1909—that no effort on the part of Germany could bring this to pass, and more shall be said on this subject in Chapter XIX. The dynamic resultant of the various forces at work was too powerful to allow of peace being maintained for long.

After dinner at the Palace on May 31, a couple of days later, the Foreign Minister, Baron von Richthofen, was talking to me, and said : “ I hear that when our Imperial Majesty wishes to discuss political affairs he now chooses you as his confidant ! ” Baron Richthofen was always very pleasant, having accepted us at the valuation of our mutual cousins. This made things far easier for us in German society than they would otherwise have been, because generally speaking military attachés in Berlin took part in official gatherings only, but in the rare event of family relationships many doors were opened which would otherwise have been closed. After my time a French military attaché, the Marquis de la Guiche, who married Princess Alice of Arenberg, was very exceptionally situated, owing to her relations with the Prussian branch of her family.

It should be mentioned, in connexion with Richthofen's observation about imperial confidences, that the Chancellor, and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the day, were very naturally opposed to their being made to military attachés. These officers had no official relations whatsoever with either of these statesmen, and misunder-



standings followed by serious results might conceivably arise sometimes. When M. Georges Louis was French ambassador at St. Petersburg in 1912 he did not always accurately report the communications made to him by Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, who was often very elusive; but M. Louis was alone to blame for his inexactitudes, whatever his reasons for them were. He was certainly unfortunate more than once, and if Nicholas II had chosen to discuss the same problems with the French military attaché difficult situations might easily have arisen.

King Edward had been appointed Chief of Queen Victoria's Dragoons after his accession, and the officers invited me to meet the Emperor at luncheon on June 11. His Majesty paid me the compliment of drinking my health, and told me he had overheard some of my hosts express a hope that our monarch would present the regiment with his portrait. I was able to say that his Majesty had already decided to do this. The Kaiser mentioned that things were not proceeding so satisfactorily in South Africa as people in England were being led to believe, and his statement was unfortunately a true one. He also said he thought it was "a great mistake" to withdraw any seasoned troops from that country before their reliefs were quite fit to take their places.

We went off to Weimar a few days afterwards, where some excellent trout fishing had been given to me. Fish caught above the town were put back if under one pound, while none scaling less than two pounds were kept if taken below the city. It was not a chalk stream, but the dry fly was a very successful lure. Mr. Moore, the United States consul, and a very fine fisherman, had imported some rainbows. Weimar is about four hundred miles from the sea, and the Ilm, which flows into the Elbe, is not broad, but had a good depth of water. On one afternoon three rainbows were taken of which the smallest weighed nearly four pounds, while the largest scaled over six. Just at that time a correspondence was going on in *The Field* about rainbow trout in Europe, and the editor asked whether authentic instances of these fish exceeding two

pounds were known, so I said one of us should write to him about this particular catch. The others scoffed at the suggestion, declaring that the writer of the letter would be denounced as a liar. The height which young rainbows jumped in endeavouring to get up-stream was extraordinary, and mention of it would doubtless be branded as coming from the ample repertory of Mr. Benjamin Trouvato.

We returned to Berlin towards the end of June in order to attend the wedding of a cousin of my wife's, Baroness Daisy von Richthofen, with Baron von Scheliha, then a subaltern in the 8rd Foot Guards, Hindenburg's old regiment. A sketch of the proceedings may be given, but before doing this a fact can be mentioned which has a direct bearing on the allegation that the date of the outbreak of the Great War was fixed in Germany some time before it occurred.

A sister of Daisy von Scheliha was married to Wilfried von Dassel, who, in August 1914, was a field officer in another Guards' regiment, Queen Augusta's, and died of wounds. Several of its officers went on their annual leave on July 25, the colonel, whose wife was an American lady, going to France. He got back over the frontier at the last moment, having been delayed by the disorganization on the French railways caused by the passage of troop trains, but his wife could not get ready in time, and eventually returned via Italy to Germany. Of course a man in his position would not have been employed on intelligence work in any circumstances, and certainly no leave at all would have been granted to the officers of those picked troops, the Prussian Guard Corps, if war had been thought of. A cavalry officer, by name Ritter, was stationed at Metz, and he told me that the French did not, as was alleged, withdraw their forces for a distance of six miles in his region. Major Ritter is married to an English lady, and is a very quiet, modest, man; he declared that there were frequent violations of the frontier around Metz in and after 1911; in fact everything was pointing, a considerable time before the event, to the raising of the curtain on the awful tragedy. Both antagonists were

straining at the leash which one slight jerk would snap.

The wedding on June 27 was a serious undertaking, as my wife and I had to represent her family. On the day preceding the ceremony there was a luncheon party given by Uncle Oswald, the Foreign Minister, to the bride and bridegroom and the numerous Richthofen and Scheliha clans. There were about fifty people present, of whom we only knew a few besides the Minister, and his sister, Frau von Elbe; the others had assembled from all parts of the empire. Among them was a most interesting man, the celebrated traveller, Richthofen, whose monumental works on the mineral wealth of China were largely, if not chiefly, responsible for her subsequent development.

The luncheon was a lengthy business; a number of speeches were made, and we did not leave the dining-room until five o'clock, having sat down at one. When everybody rose we shook hands all round, and my wife counted—so she said—that she had made one hundred and eight handshakes, including those when we arrived.

But the ceremonial for the day was not finished, for we had to attend the *Polter Abend* in the evening at the bride's home. As the proceedings were to commence at seven o'clock and were to last until a late hour, Mrs. Waters thought it would be correct to wear an evening frock, only to discover that she was in a minority of one! A *Polter Abend* (Nuptial Eve) is a medley of recitations bearing on the morrow's ceremony, offerings of flowers, *tableaux vivants*, and dances.

My wife was determined to be properly dressed for the wedding on the 27th. A very numerous company assembled in a large room in the Kaiserhof hotel, which was close to the church, and she wore a very pretty day frock and hat, only to find that all the other ladies were in evening gowns, cut very low and off the shoulders, as was the rule at the Prussian Court! Shoals of officers were presented to her, but nobody, not even a woman, appeared to notice her mistake. The civil ceremony had taken place in the forenoon, and we had only to form a procession and walk across the street, which had been red-carpeted, to

the church. The regimental band played exquisitely, and the effect in the domed building was grand.

As Mrs. Waters was the only English relation present, she had the Foreign Secretary for partner during the day. When the wedding was over we all adjourned to the hotel for the breakfast, having first congratulated the bride, a lovely and charming girl, and bridegroom, a very pleasant man, who rose to distinction in the war. We sat down at three o'clock to the strains of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," about seventy of us, but the meal was interrupted after the second course, when the Foreign Minister proposed the health of the German Emperor, which was cheered to the echo, while the band played the National Anthem, which is the same as our own, and the most effective of the many known to me. No sooner had we sat down again than some other relative proposed another toast, and so this went on; it took a good deal of time, because we all had to get up after each health, walk round the room, and clink glasses, besides shaking hands.

The day was unfortunately quite spoilt for my wife. Down the centre of the tables there were small lamps, something like night-lights, in open cut-glass dishes. One of these suddenly flew into fragments, and the boiling grease spurted all over her hand and wrist. She was very badly burnt, but the prompt first-aid remedies minimized the effects, so that she was able to endure until the proceedings terminated. The breakfast came to an end at half-past five, and then dancing went on until it was time for the happy couple to start for their honeymoon, and we left for Weimar after their departure. The whole affair was very well done, and my wife said the arrangements were much better than at a crowded wedding in England.

Sir Frank Lascelles was at home on leave, so I had reckoned on fishing until towards the end of July, when something happened which called me hurriedly to London.

## CHAPTER IX

WHEN the Emperor was in England for Queen Victoria's funeral he invited the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, and Mr. St. John Brodrick, the Secretary of State for War (now Lord Midleton), to attend the manœuvres at Danzig in the following September, and they were to bring three or four officers with them. Four days after arriving at Weimar a letter from the Military Secretary in London informed me that Lord Roberts had received a threatening and anonymous missive in German, which stated that he must ask to be allowed to decline the imperial invitation, otherwise the writer and his friends would do all in their power to make him regret his visit.

Lord Roberts did not wish to attach undue importance to the threat ; he was anxious, of course, for the Emperor's sake that any unpleasantness should be avoided, and as his Lordship always hated hurting anybody's feelings he would personally have preferred that his Majesty should remain in ignorance of the letter. We talked the matter over at luncheon in London ; the ambassador, who was in England, gave his mind to it, and King Edward wished to see me about it. His Majesty agreed that the Emperor ought to be informed, and I returned to Berlin on July 6 and lunched at Potsdam on the following day.

I told the Emperor about the letter and Lord Roberts's wish that his Majesty should not be troubled about it, if this could be avoided, and he replied : " You have done quite right to tell me. They want to interfere with my guests, do they ? I will give them a good knock if they do, and you need not be uneasy ; I will take care of your Commander-in-Chief." His Majesty went off to Norway after he had seen me, but his mother, the Empress Frederick, died on August 5 ; Professor Renvers had said that she

could not live beyond the middle of that month. All invitations to the manœuvres for officers from abroad were postponed, therefore, until the following year. The Empress Frederick was buried at Potsdam on August 18, and only the nearest relatives, including King Edward and Queen Alexandra, were present with, of course, their personal suites.

Diplomatists should no doubt be wary and not take unknown people at their face value. A couple of days before the Empress Frederick's funeral a gentleman, giving a good name, called at the Embassy. Sir Frank Lascelles was at Homburg to be near the King and a subordinate saw the visitor. I forget what he wanted, but I was asked whether I knew anything about him. On professing my ignorance, my collocutor said: "It is very suspicious; what should an Englishman, whom we do not know, be doing in Berlin?" On one of my visits to that city after the war, while the French were still in occupation of the Ruhr, I thought it would be courteous to call upon the ambassador. His Excellency, however, had only just returned from an important interview with the Foreign Minister, and was busy composing a telegram, so I was received by a young gentleman. After explaining my courtesy call and mentioning that I was leaving the city an hour or two later he cross-examined me delicately—I knew the process so well; so I said it was pleasant to see something of the building, if only the outside waiting-room, as I had spent many happy days there as the guest of more than one ambassador, besides having been military attaché. But my young friend was evidently not satisfied, so he sprung a question upon me.

"What are you doing in Berlin?"

"Well, I have been to see a few old friends, and am on my way to Potsdam to stay with the Richthofens; one of them was Foreign Minister."

The secretary of embassy was almost but not quite prepared to accept my statement, and after a few more veiled queries I departed; it was quite amusing, and reminded me of the 1901 incident.

After the Empress Frederick's funeral we returned to

Weimar for fishing, and patronized the Elephant hotel, which was extraordinarily cheap and excellent. It had a huge and very old signboard depicting that noble beast, and an artistic lady, Miss Blanche Tollemache, was staying in the house. She set her heart on purchasing the signboard, but it appeared that it was an historical treasure and the landlord refused to part with it on any terms. Her persistence prevailed, however, in the end, but the transportation costs must have been very heavy, and it would have been a difficult matter to find a resting-place in keeping with the work of art.

I caught a fish in peculiar circumstances, and perhaps the story may be given as nobody has yet believed it. The water had fallen very low in one part of the stream and I hooked a half-pound trout. While it was being brought to bank it seemed to have entangled itself in weeds under the surface, but when it was close to land I saw that another black, ravenous fellow had seized its small brother across the back. It looked as if its teeth were so firmly fixed in the prey that the cannibal could not let go, but as soon as both were in the net the small fish dropped out of the other's jaws. The latter should have weighed at least three pounds had he been in good condition, but he (it was a male fish) only scaled a trifle less than one and a half pounds, and so was better dead than alive.

When Sir Frank Lascelles was settled again in Berlin in the early autumn he took me with him to visit the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in order to present his credentials and congratulate the young ruler, who had attained his official majority some time previously. We had made inquiries, whence we gathered it would be wiser to sleep at Lübeck instead of trespassing on the Grand Ducal hospitality, so we went to the capital early on the following morning. We had had very little sleep; whenever we went on these expeditions we always took piquet cards; Sir Frank was a past-master of the game, as he was in many other ways, while my performances were fair to middling. On this occasion nothing he could do was right, for nearly all the cards fell to me, and the longer

we played the worse did his luck become. The credentials' ceremony did not last long, but we were shown into apartments on our arrival so that we could change into our best clothes; it seemed odd that Royal Highnesses should live in such uncomfortable hygienic conditions in the twentieth century, but perhaps royalty had more modern conveniences than humbler mortals.

The ceremony itself was very brief and quite uninteresting, and as these visits had to be paid some time I should have preferred going to Dresden, which we could not do as there was a British *Chargé d'Affaires* there. Lascelles told me that the custom at the Saxon Court was for presentations to be made in the evening, when his Majesty was playing long whist. On the newcomer being placed near the King, the latter would look up with a surprised air, give a nod, and then you could go home.

In September my appointment to Berlin was made permanent for the new term of three years, counting, of course, from the date of my arrival the year before. Grierson had told me he did not wish to return, as "I have had enough of Germans to last me all my life." Things had been made unpleasant for him when the Boer War broke out, and Waldersee had certainly been most ungracious to him in China; at times the German Commander-in-Chief had ignored Grierson's official position, and the cause of this must have been jealousy and spite. Waldersee had not a nice nature.

The Foreign Office had informed the ambassador of its intention to make my appointment permanent, provided his Excellency had no objection. As he was at Homburg with King Edward he mentioned this, and inquired whether his Majesty approved. The Sovereign was very angry, Lascelles told me afterwards, at not having been consulted before any further steps were taken, and he told Sir Frank that military attachés were appointed by himself, and "Ministers must learn to keep their places"!

Before the manœuvres commenced at Danzig in the middle of September a Chinese Mission had arrived from Peking. The German Government had, it declared, manifested great magnanimity by withdrawing nearly all



the troops of the Fatherland from North China after the suppression of the Boxer rising. The real reason for this step had been, as mentioned elsewhere, the impossibility of obtaining a sufficient number of volunteers for service in the Far East after the first glamour had worn off ; the attractions offered, although good, were not adequate.

When the terms of peace were being negotiated the German Emperor demanded very naturally that the Peking Court should dispatch a mission of Atonement to his Majesty to express regret for the murder of the German Minister, Baron von Ketteler. The demand was accepted and the Mission, headed by Prince Tchun, a member of the Imperial Family, set out. The ceremonial to be adopted was the subject of much deliberation at Berlin, and the Kaiser was firm on one point, namely, that the Prince, on entering his Majesty's presence, should kotow in accordance with the practice of the Chinese Court. This obligation had not been mentioned before Prince Tchun had arrived in Europe ; it was considered that he would then have no choice but to comply with the ordinance.

He had become restive about this by the time that he was approaching German territory, and at last he said that ill-health would prevent him from continuing his journey ! He won, for the game was in his hands, and it was necessary to get him into Germany and to Potsdam at all costs. A revised ceremonial was therefore drawn up. The Prince proceeded to the Neues Palais at Potsdam, where the Emperor was in residence, and found a Guard of Honour drawn up in front of the main entrance. But the Guard took no notice of the visitor as he descended from his carriage ! It was standing at ease, the officers were chatting, and some were smoking. The Prince could do nothing at that stage, it was too late ; the Emperor had been too crafty. When his Imperial Highness emerged after his apologies had been accepted, the state of affairs was altogether different. The Guard of Honour rendered to Prince Tchun his due with that absolute perfection for which the Prussian Guard Corps was so justly celebrated. It was the last word in stage management. I was told afterwards that his Imperial Highness

had two reasons for firmly refusing to kotow. One was that he would have considered the act as an indignity in Europe, while the other was of a more personal nature : if he had consented, then Chinese etiquette would have required that he should commit suicide in the Kaiser's throne-room !

The Chinese Mission then proceeded to Danzig ; the invitation could scarcely be declined, and the Emperor wished to show the Prince a sample of the German Army, so that he might see that military perfection was not confined to the Corps of Guards. The proceedings commenced with a parade of troops. On such an occasion this usually occupied about a couple of hours, but this time four and a half elapsed before it was over. It was a nice, warm day, and I nearly fell asleep on my charger, wondering when the ceaseless marchings-past would end. All things, however, good and bad, come to an end some time. Prince Tchun, a pleasant-looking boy, acknowledged the salutes by bobbing his head as if it were jerked by a string ; he was in a carriage. They were not, of course, intended for him but for the Kaiser, and as the Chinese are unparalleled in inserting pinpricks, I wondered whether the visitor meant to have his score off the Emperor.

Now comes the inevitable story : when everything was over, the Kaiser inquired what impression the sight had made upon the Prince. A very natural reply would have been that China should take especial care not to affront the German nation again after her representative had witnessed such a specimen of its military power. But the astute Prince was reported to have answered that " for more than four thousand years we in my country have abandoned this silly, stupid, method of plaguing men ! "

Another incident concerning myself at the same manœuvres was very disagreeable indeed. We have heard how the Germans criticized the Emperor for his supposed English tendencies, and it was, of course, generally known that we saw each other from time to time. The Anglo-phobes therefore were anxious to make the most of any opportunity to put an end to our conversations by erecting an insurmountable barrier between us. This time they

had an excellent chance apparently. When my appointment was made permanent, it was necessary for me to inform the Emperor personally of the fact.

In the ordinary course of events I should have seen scarcely anything of the Kaiser at the manœuvres, where he would have been fully occupied from early morning until late at night. His Majesty had left for Danzig before the official news of my appointment had reached the office of the Chief of his Military Cabinet, the late General Count von Hülsen-Haeseler, who told me to inform the Emperor during the manœuvres. Not wishing to trouble his Majesty until their last day, I waited until then, and he sent for me. Besides reporting myself, my instructions were to ask whether the permanent appointment had his approval, for he had only recently refused to accept Colonel (now General) Gourko, a son of the celebrated Field-Marshal.

In reply he said, "That was very well done ; I am very glad," and shook hands with me. There was a pause in the manœuvres owing to an infantry division having gone astray, and after a few moments of general conversation the Kaiser continued : "Now, Waters, you must look after your correspondence !" At least I thought this was his meaning, and was puzzled, wondering whether some criticisms of Germans in a letter to England had come to his notice and angered him.

He must have noticed my puzzled look, for he added after a second or two : "I mean your newspaper *correspondents* [the italics are mine] at these manœuvres. They have written most offensive strictures about them and have insulted the German Army ; also they have ridiculed our uniforms. I won't have it, and they shall all be kicked out if it happens again."

This was really very astonishing, and I felt sure there must be another side to the story, for whatever the correspondents might have thought, they were certain to have had sense enough not to queer their own pitch. I told the Emperor that what he had said was news to me ; that they were sure to be men of experience, and altogether unlikely to do anything improper or offensive,

adding that any criticisms they might have uttered would certainly have been in much better taste than German ones about the British Army. I was feeling peevish, and the opportunity was a good one to plant a dart, for my argument was irrefutable.

Several English correspondents had come to Danzig, and it was the first time that we had met each other. Two days previously one of them, Mr. Hales of the *Daily Express*, had told me he regretted not having seen some German manœuvres before he went to the Boer War, as the blunders committed in the former would have ruined the reputation of any British general. My reply had merely been that most people make mistakes sometimes, and this was about all that passed between us.

"One of them," said his Majesty, "is named Hales, and he gives you as his authority. It is in the *Lokal Anzeiger* (a Berlin paper with a great circulation) and other German papers."

Some malevolent German correspondent in London had, I found afterwards, telegraphed and grossly misrepresented what was published there. I told the Emperor that the statement about myself was an absolute lie, and in order that no misconception should exist I asked, "Does your Majesty believe me?" We were staring at each other, and he accepted my denial absolutely, but told me to "be sure" and give the correspondents "a good scolding." I said that only a few casual words had passed between Mr. Hales and myself, adding that blunders were made sometimes at manœuvres, as in South Africa. In reply to this the Emperor said he knew nothing about blunders in South Africa (they were really one of his favourite topics at that time), but "the German Army must not be criticized." Once again he impressed upon me on no account whatever to omit flaying the gentlemen of the Press, and the interview ended leaving us on the best of terms with each other. It had not been necessary to explain the utter improbability that I would have discussed debatable matters with correspondents hitherto unknown to me. I had had relations with many of these English gentlemen in the earlier part of the Boer War,

where I quickly made up my mind that they were absolutely reliable ; in fact, in order to assist them in their onerous duties, it had been my practice to acquaint them beforehand confidentially of General Gatacre's proposed plans, and never once did I have to censor one single indiscreet or doubtful remark ; they were admirable, and a pleasure to work with, so that each of us really helped the other in our duties to the military situation and to the public.

They were of course specially selected men, and when I was invalided home one of them, Mr. A. J. Adams, wrote me a letter which ends thus : " To conclude, I beg to tender the most grateful thanks of my colleagues and myself for the assistance you always so readily extended to us, and our sincerest regrets that you cannot return to the 8rd Division." This was a great compliment from such men.

It was a thousand pities that our special correspondents were so muzzled during the Great War when they could have rendered invaluable aid. It was not likely that great English journals would have sent any but thoroughly well qualified representatives to Danzig. As to scolding the visitors, I put this in a different way, and said the Emperor had heard they had expressed themselves too sharply about the German Army, and this had displeased the authorities. They assured me—and they spoke the truth—that they had given it their unstinted admiration, while naturally drawing attention to some obvious blunders.

I did a little mental arithmetic. This made it clear that Mr. Hales's message had been dispatched on September 17, was published with the editor's headlines on the following morning, and was then re-transmitted in a garbled form to Germany, and was issued there on September 19, the day of my interview with the Kaiser. That is what happened, and somebody in the Emperor's entourage, anxious to cause black trouble, must have hastened to his Majesty with the reports at a very early hour on the same morning.

He evidently had not placed much, if any, faith in the allegations concerning myself, otherwise he would not

have been so very friendly when I announced my permanent appointment and inquired whether it met with his approval, but he wished to have the matter threshed out; some trusted officer had shown him the very offensive messages in the German papers, which angered and hurt him, for as a letter from Balmoral, dated October 9, informed me, the Emperor had always been "so fair and so friendly in his criticisms of our military system." King Edward was also pleased to say that I had shown "great tact" throughout the whole affair, and he liked the thrust at the German Press which I had dragged in by the forelock.

After procuring a copy of the *Daily Express* of September 18, I found that Mr. Hales had been very unjustly accused. His dispatch was a long one, couched in terms calculated to attract the readers of a popular newspaper, and while he had criticized some of the leadership he had not done so in any offensive manner. As regards myself, he had been kind enough to pay me an unmerited compliment. As a matter of fact all the correspondents had, as they had told me, expressed the greatest admiration for the German Army; but their experience had made them quick to note the very same tactical errors which the Minister of War, von Gossler, and other generals had also denounced in my presence!

On September 17 the Blue cavalry, superior in numbers and under the command of Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia, had been woefully mismanaged by him, the Inspector-General of Cavalry. Impossible situations do sometimes arise at manœuvres which would not occur in war, and there was a remarkable instance which I saw in England in 1925, where the senior officers were all men of great experience in the field. But if his Royal Highness did not shine as a cavalry leader at Danzig, neither were his subordinates always qualified to criticize our cavalry tactics in South Africa.

On one occasion the Prince had committed his division to a charge, and the terrain had separated a squadron of cuirassiers from its unit, really because it had no ground scouts out. Its leader suddenly saw a cavalry brigade

charging on his left and promptly attacked it in flank, which threw it into complete confusion. Both attacker and attacked belonged, however, to the same division, a remarkable error as the hostile force wore a distinctive headdress. German is a magnificent oratorical language, and a heavy draft was drawn upon its resources ! On the whole the Danzig manœuvres were rather a failure, and no doubt this fact rendered expert foreign criticism all the more unwelcome to the Kaiser and his officers.

The German newspapers were bitterly Anglophobe, but the Danzig sheets outdid their contemporaries, for they descended to the most vulgar abuse of the Emperor's personal guest, Lord Lonsdale, and ridiculed—unwisely—the American Army, and the United States military attaché, Major Kerr, who was quite innocent of having said anything to anybody. All through my time at Berlin there were ceaseless attempts to induce the Kaiser to abandon his supposed sentimental attachment to England and to keep all persons and things English at arm's length. These efforts showed the obtuseness of the German official and newspaper intellects ; their jealousy of us was the best proof that other countries might learn a good deal from our ways, and personal contact was one means of acquiring the knowledge. The Kaiser undoubtedly admired us immensely in some respects, but behind it all was his desire, as German Emperor, to further the interests of Germany.

The chief object of pursuit was myself, and the Danzig editors stated that a reply from me to their allegations must be quickly forthcoming. They were disappointed when no notice whatever was taken of the demand. To have entered into a newspaper controversy with such scurrilous and lying men would have been ridiculous. Shortly afterwards the editor of the *Lokal Anzeiger* called upon me in Berlin and sent a message to say he wanted an interview about the manœuvre incident. He got another message in reply telling him that a German newspaper was welcome to print what it liked about me whenever it should be short of copy suitable for its readers. I misjudged the situation, for I expected some peculiarly

artistic retorts, but the paper let the subject drop without another word.

Before leaving Danzig, however, an opportunity was afforded me of planting a dart. The press allegations which had been manufactured in London were not mentioned, but a senior officer said in the course of conversation that he had read about some occurrence or other; somebody else contradicted him, and they appealed to me. Knowing one of them to be bitterly Anglophobe, I expressed the hope that I had too much sense to believe anything in a German newspaper unless it was confirmed from an outside and truthful source. I wondered, while speaking, whether it would be a duel next morning. During my service as military attaché I always remembered what that great man, the late Sir Robert Morier, had told me. When he was quite a young diplomatist he made up his mind to go out if challenged when abroad, instead of explaining our law and custom; but the occasion never arose, either in his case or in mine.

The odd part about all this incident and others was that we were expected to submit uncomplainingly to abuse—to say nothing about falsehoods—of the most outrageous description. In fairness it should be mentioned that German newspapers were not the only purveyors of this sort of stuff, for the French and Russian ones were on much the same level. It shall be seen in the next chapter that the British criticisms still rankled in the Emperor's mind.

The fact is that there was a great difference between the English and the continental Press; each was, of course, enormously influential, but in England no newspaper of standing is coarse or obscene. It is also notorious that many continental journals are open to change their opinions if sufficient consideration be offered to their managements, and one such proposal was made to me in Berlin and declined. But he would be a bold man who should attempt to bribe a British newspaper of repute. We may cordially detest a particular paper on account of its views, but no sensible person would imagine that mere money could have any influence. There were bitterly Anglophobe newspapers in Germany, such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*,



which did not descend to vulgarity, but our standard was usually higher than that of the continental Press.

It would have been surprising if the British Press had not at last become tired of the ceaseless and venomous attacks of German periodicals, and I daresay it irritated the editors and leader-writers of the latter when they were touched on the raw by articles which pierced their skins in a very gentlemanly but effective manner while their weapon was sometimes a filthy bludgeon.

In the *National Review* for November 1901 there appeared an article by A. B. C. which created widespread attention in Germany because its author suggested an entente between England and Russia, and the German editors were alarmed. Most of the comments on it were of the usual type, but one important paper, the *Post*, published quite a moderate and obviously inspired review of the article, for the journal was one of our bitterest haters. It appeared, therefore, that German newspapers could, when desired, be made to change their tone, which leads me to the conclusion that the Chancellor, Bülow, relished the filth vomited by some of his journals, and we must leave it at that.

There was a curious sequel to his Majesty's interdict on newspaper criticism of the German Army. Nine months later, on July 9, 1902, a long and astonishing article appeared in the *Vorwärts*, the great social-democratic daily paper. The Boer War was at an end ; several Germans had served with our foe in some of the notable engagements, and had rendered reports to the Great General Staff in Berlin.

The article was entitled "Drill at all Costs," and absolutely ridiculed the training of the German Army ! Officers and men, it declared, became mere machines owing to the system which drove every shred of initiative and responsibility out of them by its ceaseless devotion to parade and other rigid formations. The result was, continued the article, that the troops were completely ignorant of the two principal requirements for actual warfare, namely, the ability of each man to find the proper range and to bring an effective fire to bear upon the enemy at the most propitious moment.

*Vorwärts* did not venture to go so far as to say that German troops, if pitted against Boer riflemen, none of whom had ever heard of drill, might have suffered repulses like our own in the earlier stages of the struggle, but it said the same thing in a different way. The writer of the article declared that the British Army had been trained on the same lines as the German, and explained how the Boers at Spion Kop, expert riflemen and accustomed to act on their own initiative, had successfully attacked General Woodgate's brigade, whose men did not know what to do unless they received orders beforehand. The article was in fact much harsher than anything that Mr. Hales had written about the Danzig manœuvres in the *Daily Express*.

The *Vorwärts* had some very remarkable sources of information, and from time to time it confounded the German authorities, civil and military, by publishing confidential or even secret documents. Other journals had also criticized the system of training since those manœuvres, but their language had been more discreet. It would, of course, have been impossible for the huge continental armies to adopt Boer tactics; they would not have had room to deploy.

We were all very sorry indeed to lose Lord and Lady Gough in October in consequence of his appointment as Minister Resident at Dresden; it would have been impossible to find two more charming and thoughtful personalities. He was succeeded by the late Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Buchanan, who was ambassador to Russia during the most critical period of her history.

A special King's Messenger arrived on October 21 with a letter from King Edward which I was to deliver into the Emperor's hand together with the British medal for the recent operations in North China. The King wished me to have a frank conversation with the Kaiser, if the latter should be in the mood for this. The reply to my request for an audience was a summons to go to Potsdam on the next day but one. The interview lasted more than an hour, and so many topics were discussed that the principal ones had better be recorded in another chapter.

## CHAPTER X

AFTER reading the letter, which he said he should answer at an early date, and expressing his very sincere thanks for the medal—almost the first British one to be issued—the Emperor began at once to speak about the war in South Africa. He must have seen little prospect of the Boer Republics ever coming under German domination, but he was sometimes very optimistic, and thought, perhaps, that Fortune's wheel might turn in Germany's favour. On the other hand, the interference with trade caused by the struggle had involved his subjects in heavy losses, and this practical factor weighed more with him, I believe, than any far-fetched dreams, and made him long for peace as soon as possible.

But he was not in a hopeful mood ; he said his information was that things were going very badly, that after deducting the troops locked up in garrisons, blockhouses, and lines of communication, in addition to those in hospital, and men sent home as being unfit for further service, there could not be more than about 20,000 fighting troops available for operations in the field.

The Emperor went on to say that the public in England was being "hoodwinked" ; it was led to believe that General French (afterwards Lord Ypres) had a large force at his disposal and that the Boers could no longer seriously threaten Cape Colony, whereas the truth appeared to be that he had only about 8,000 serviceable troops with him, and was obliged to remain in the neighbourhood of Cape Town lest the Boers should capture that city. His Majesty was alluding to Mr. Brodrick's letter to Sir Howard Vincent stating that we had 200,000 troops in South Africa, and he remarked that this totalled all those already mentioned, and the



Man to rouse her. But who is to do it? You want a Spurgeon."

It occurred to me to point out that, although the continental Press had been most offensive about our troops, it was fair to remember that many of them had been in the field for two years without winter quarters or rest, and I believed this was hitherto unprecedented in history. His Majesty admitted freely that the strain in such circumstances must be "almost unbearable." He told me that he received frequent letters from South Africa which depicted the situation in very dark colours. He said that some of our requirements were fulfilled by purchases in Germany—a fact known to me—and that he allowed this to be done "although it is not strictly according to neutrality."

He then criticized Mr. Chamberlain's rejection of the terms which Lord Kitchener had proposed to offer to the Boers, and declared that he was endeavouring to carry out a policy without knowing whether we had sufficient military force to put it in execution. The Emperor also said that Cabinet Ministers in England had no idea of the hardships endured in South Africa, and if Mr. Chamberlain would go and spend one night on the veldt instead of making speeches on temperance at such a crisis "it would do him a world of good and teach him something."

Only a few years earlier his Majesty had been, as we have seen in Chapter VII, a great admirer of that statesman, and it may be advisable here to anticipate somewhat the future. The Emperor invited me to luncheon about a fortnight after this interview of October 23, and attacked the Colonial Secretary in the sharpest terms. I had informed his Majesty that his remark about spending a night on the veldt had been repeated to Sir Frank Lascelles, who had said I must transmit it to London, because it would "make Chamberlain so angry." Thereupon the Kaiser, no doubt thinking of my report of his previous threat of intervention (which shall be related presently), laughed and asked me: "What have you been making me say now?" He then expressed his own heartfelt

desire, which was to send the Colonial Secretary to his death! "Chamberlain," he said, "ought to be taken to South Africa, marched across the continent, and then shot." A "firing party" was, declared the Emperor, what he wanted.

"Sir," was my reply, "many of my countrymen would like to see Mr. Chamberlain Prime Minister of England; they positively adore him."

"Oh, never! They couldn't!"

Some time afterwards Baron von Eckhardstein, who was still at the German Embassy in London, spoke to me about Mr. Chamberlain. We met at a country house party and he was naturally always desirous of procuring information, while perhaps giving none himself. My remarks, like his own, were rather vague, so he became more definite, and said the Emperor had a great admiration for the British statesman and was very fond of him personally.

This was surprising, for I knew that his Majesty's sentiments had in no degree altered. Wondering what occult scheme was in Eckhardstein's mind, and remembering that he was a foreign diplomatist and must therefore have an eye to business all the time, I said it seemed rather odd for the Kaiser to appreciate Mr. Chamberlain so much in view of the intensely violent feeling in his country against England in general and the Colonial Secretary in particular. But Eckhardstein stood firm, and said the Emperor had only quite recently again assured him of the fact. I replied that this was very interesting, but declined to be drawn. It may be that Eckhardstein knew from Berlin what his master had told me, and wanted to hear what I had to say about it, or whether I would say anything at all, which I did not do.

To return to the Potsdam audience of October 23, the Emperor, after he had finished speaking about Mr. Chamberlain, said that for many years previously we had fought only against badly armed semi-savages, and that we were perilously near getting into the same frame of mind which possessed the French before 1870, who imagined that predominance in Europe must necessarily be the sequel

to their successes in Algeria. This was undoubtedly the reasoning of some British officers, to judge by their utterances.

"There was a lull," said the Kaiser, "when Queen Victoria died," and he believed a settlement could then have been reached by giving prominent Boers a share of important administrative and executive posts, but he thought that Mr. Chamberlain had "made a dreadful mess of affairs."

The audience was, of course, intensely interesting, and the Emperor's moods changed from time to time; some casual remark would give a lighter tone to the conversation, but he had been on the whole serious. The most important part was to come, and it related to the continuance of the war.

His Majesty declared that, owing to an unsatisfactory and badly managed military system, we were not within measurable distance of bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion. This state of affairs, he said, was causing great inconvenience to trade generally; German merchants at Bremen and Hamburg were stocked with cargoes for South Africa which they were unable to ship.

I replied that our traders were in exactly the same position, and had the additional burden of paying for the struggle; we did not wish to be rough with the Boers, as we intended to annex their country; otherwise, I said, we could have crushed them into submission earlier. The Emperor then fired his shell and answered that the situation could not go on indefinitely as "people cannot be held back for ever," and that "then there will be intervention."

"Well, Sir," I replied, "you may intervene, and you may pull us down, but that will not make us stop the war, and we will do our best to pull down Germany with us."

He did not show the slightest trace of annoyance at my rejoinder; he was speaking quite frankly and was at all times ready to give his listener every opportunity of expressing himself; at least, that was always my experience. I think he relished argument when he saw one was not cowed by his personality, and there was evidence

of this on the occasion in question. Just after some plain speaking on my part he had an excellent opportunity of terminating the interview without any abruptness. He was very fond of his children, and two of his young sons, the Princes August Wilhelm and Oscar, were to resume their studies at Plön on the day of my audience. The Emperor had been engaged with me for some time when a message came from the Empress to say that the boys would have to start soon for the station. He said he was still busy, and presently another message came, but he replied that he could not be disturbed; finally an urgent reminder informed his Majesty that the boys really must start at once or they would miss their train. He let them go without seeing them, and I was told afterwards that this omission on his part was unprecedented, and that the Empress had something to say about it later!

International trade is a subject which has always interested me enormously. Domestic and foreign commerce were bad in Germany at this time, and I knew that the obstacles in their way, caused by the war, much occupied his Majesty's mind. The Germans were very fine traders, and spared no pains to develop business. At the commencement of this century their shipping provided the fastest means of communication with New York, and our leading marine firms were being sharply criticized in England for their dilatory methods.

They argued, however, that the travelling public did not care about high speeds, which surprised me, and I discussed the subject one day with Herr Platen, then the managing director of the North German Lloyd line. He told me that his company did not profess to be philanthropists, but wished to earn dividends, and that every available berth in his fastest steamers to New York was taken up months beforehand because of their speed.

He also asked me: "Would an English shipping director examine a ship and her stores before she sails?"

"I imagine not," was my reply.

"Well," said Platen, "one of us goes all over every steamer before she leaves port to see that everything is as it should be; moreover, he personally examines a



proportion of the stores ; we leave nothing to chance, and that is why our line is so popular."

Certainly those ships were most comfortable, and had two immense further attractions. The prices of wines were ridiculously low compared with British vessels, and the tips were a fraction of those expected in our steamers.

It would not have surprised me if the Emperor had flown into a rage when he heard me on the subject of his threat of intervention, for my remark about pulling the German Empire off its pedestal obviously implied that his naval and military forces would be defeated in their attempt, and as we have seen the German Army at any rate "must not be criticized." But he turned instead to another matter, namely, the case of Sir Redvers Buller.

The supersession of that distinguished general in the Aldershot command had aroused a great deal of excitement in England, and it was also being much discussed in Germany. He had made some remark at a public luncheon in London which was in those days considered indiscreet, and the Secretary of State for War, Mr. St. John Brodrick, and the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, had inflicted this penalty. I had heard from Balmoral that the incident was a "most painful" one, and that while the Government and the Opposition were "practically in accord" with the punishment the "Free Lances on either side are making much mischief and capital out of it."

The Emperor was much shocked at Sir Redvers's speech at the luncheon, and remarked that there was a great deal too much self-advertisement on the part of certain officers. Apropos of this statement, there are always people who endeavour to miss no opportunity of pushing their fortunes ; it is a very human trait, and a story may be told in connexion therewith.

Some time prior to 1914 a senior officer was given a post which was much sought after, but it occurred to him that, as the higher you rise the fewer are the available appointments, it would be well if he could think of some arresting plan wherewith to impress the authorities. He cudgelled his brains to devise a scheme to attract their attention, and at last hit upon the following one. This

consisted in engraving in the building the names of all the officers who had ever worked there ; it took some time to ascertain their names by searching old records, but eventually this labour of love was completed. It appeared, however, that the number was so large as to necessitate many of them being carved not only on the walls but also on the flooring. When the work was finished and the cost calculated, these former officers—those, at least, who were still living—were asked to contribute their share of the expense, and some wag said it was a new departure to be requested to pay in your own lifetime for the privilege of being trampled underfoot ! His name, it appeared, was one of those on the floor, and this reminded one of a mat with “ Wipe your Boots ” on it. I do not know whether the founder of the scheme was helped professionally by its execution, but his victorious career continued to prosper.

To revert to my interview at Potsdam, his Majesty spoke with contempt of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and some of his unpatriotic speeches, nor did he spare the Cabinet ; Lord Salisbury, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and Lord Lansdowne, all had their turn. I said that one of them—whom I named—was, at any rate, a charming gentleman, and this drew the retort : “ Oh, yes, but you cannot govern a country with charming gentlemen.” Tapping his forehead, he continued : “ He is no *Fliegen-Fänger* ” (fly catcher).

A volume had recently been published in England entitled *Drifting*, in which the account of our unpreparedness in a military sense had made a very strong impression upon his Majesty, so I asked him at Potsdam whether he had ascertained the name of the writer. He replied that he had made every possible effort to learn it, but had failed. If its author should see this passage it will interest him to know the Kaiser's opinion of his work.

I took advantage of my audience to inquire whether the Emperor had read Mr. Hales's article on the Danzig manœuvres in the *Daily Express* of September 18 ; he replied that he had done so and that its author could not have seen some of the operations which he professed to

describe. Moreover the article "jeered" at some of the Prussian uniforms, and altogether the Emperor still considered that Mr. Hales had "recklessly and unjustly criticized" the German troops. "This sort of thing," said the Kaiser, "will not do in Germany; it maddens the Germans, who will not stand their army being ridiculized." Now, as already mentioned in Chapter V, nearly a year previously the Emperor and the Ministry of War had been contemplating a change to clothing more suitable for modern warfare, and the former patterns of ceremonial uniforms were in fact abandoned before 1914 for service in the field for the very reasons that troops wearing them would have been far too noticeable, and uncomfortable.

It was known to me that the attacks in the German Press in September concerning myself had been discussed in the Ministry of War, and my disclaimer to the Minister, General von Gossler, had not been even acknowledged. I asked the Emperor whether it had been communicated to him, and it appeared that it had not; I said I was not surprised, and he was evidently annoyed with Gossler, an Anglophobe. His Majesty then went on to say that "if we allow English correspondents to attend our manœuvres another time, properly qualified men must be sent out." We discussed a rather intricate plan for them which came to nothing, but in reply to my request he gave me permission to say that several of our officers might attend the manœuvres in 1902 in addition to the official guests. This was very handsome of him in the circumstances.

The Emperor then spoke about the increasing bitterness against Germany in the English Press, adding that a newspaper war might result in an actual breach. There was a Press matter about which I had made up my mind to speak to his Majesty, but I had not to make the opportunity, which was furnished by his remark about the British Press. On arriving at the Palace station that morning, October 23, my eye fell on a German comic newspaper, *Simplicissimus*, on sale at the bookstall.

On its front page was a disgusting, coloured, drawing—

one could not call it even a German Press artist's caricature—representing Queen Victoria, whose funeral had taken place only nine months previously, struggling in a sea of blood to reach the shore where stood Saint Peter with his keys, and President Kruger. I had seen a good many filthy things of the kind designed to represent King Edward, the British Army, and others, but this production was the most blasphemous one that had come to my notice; nothing of the same nature could have exceeded it. I was in full uniform and my purchase of a copy did not interest the stall-keeper, who was accustomed to that sort of thing, for the journal had a large circulation.

When the Emperor had finished speaking about the irritation caused by the British Press I said that the maddened German intellect was perhaps the cause of the horrible and loathsome caricatures of my own Royal Family, alive or dead, which were on sale outside his Majesty's gates; that the most virulent anti-German among English editors and journalists never attempted to lower themselves by imitating even at a distance their German colleagues, and that if the attempt should be made the police would have the offender jailed without waiting for instructions from the Home Office or for a complaint to be lodged. I said that some German editors and pressmen loved to wallow in filth and splash it over the dead as well as over the living, especially over his own near relations.

The Emperor looked genuinely disgusted about *Simplificissimus*, but only waved his hand and remarked, "It is very sad," adding that the Press could not be controlled. My answer was that such a state of affairs was indeed sad, but I believed that the Constitution of the Empire had preserved the autocratic Press laws which had been in force before the revolutionary troubles of 1848, in which case *Simplicissimus* (a Munich paper) and its contemporary, *Kladderadatsch* (Berlin), would have been suppressed long ago, and their editors imprisoned, for their obscene conduct, if this did not have the warm sympathy of men in high places, and women too. The Kaiser did not dispute my allegations nor deny the power of the Government

over the Press in Germany, but I daresay he had never even heard of these disgusting productions, much less seen the things.

Some German editors and leader-writers were accustomed to use the bludgeon, occasionally a filthy one, and these men's caricatures of fellow-countrymen were coarse ; the fact is that they had no sense of what constitutes humour. *Simplicissimus* detested the Kaiser, and probably imagined that its loathsome presentation of the dead Queen would touch her grandson to the quick. In the earlier years of his reign William II had several times caused people to be prosecuted for *lèse-majesté* on account of words which would have passed unnoticed in England, but he had abandoned the practice before 1901 ; there had been too many acquittals. In this particular case, of course, the law would not have been applicable. His Majesty's position with regard to the Press was certainly a very difficult one in my time ; if he should have tried to restrain its tone, then he would have been still more severely criticized for his alleged Anglo-mania.

It was very gratifying to have the opportunity of expressing my views about the German Press, and when I took my departure the Emperor was no less pleasant than usual ; I daresay he sometimes felt as I did about it.

Immediately after my return to Berlin I reported to the ambassador what had been said at Potsdam, and his Excellency was very seriously disturbed about the Emperor's threat of intervention. He considered the matter, and then sent for me to ask whether I thought he should take up the subject with the Chancellor. The Emperor's remark might have had such far-reaching consequences that my view was in favour of having the matter settled as quickly as possible, so that we should know where we stood. Sir Frank Lascelles then told me that he had already made up his mind to do this, and had merely desired to learn my opinion. He carried out his resolve in a manner characteristic of his skill and tact. Instead of inditing an official dispatch to Bülow, he wrote a private letter to him wherein he asked whether the intervention mentioned by the Emperor was to be taken

as expressing the desire or the intention of the German Government.

Bülów was residing in Berlin and was, of course, obliged to consult his Sovereign at Potsdam. The ambassador received his reply on October 26. During the interval between the two letters there had been some speculation in the Embassy about the answer. It occurred to me that the Emperor, who knew that I would never keep anything back from the ambassador, might have forgotten the exact terms of what he had said, for many thousands of words are spoken in a continuous conversation of an hour or so's duration.

Lascelles showed me the Chancellor's reply. It stated that the latter did not know what the Emperor might have said to me, but his Excellency could rely (*bauen*) upon it that the German Government had no intention of intervening in the South African struggle. Whether or no the Kaiser recollected exactly what he had told me, he might easily have got out of the difficulty by saying that I had mistaken his meaning. But this was not suggested, nor was my statement queried. It was then that Lascelles told me for the first time that, if the Emperor informed the Chancellor or the Foreign Minister of his own account of a conversation between us, his report had always tallied with mine to Sir Frank, with whom one of those Ministers had subsequently—and invariably—I believe—discussed both.

The ambassador saw the Emperor shortly after my long interview with his Majesty, who told his Excellency that as his advice to the British Government was always disregarded he should no longer "stick to" us. On Sir Frank inquiring to whom he intended to transfer his affections, the Kaiser replied, "To myself." His advice to our Cabinet had certainly ranged over a large field, and King Edward told me once that his nephew would doubtless like to appoint all our Ministers, as he was so fond of meddling. But one thread ran through all the counsels, namely, the adoption of measures to increase the preparedness of our land forces, regular and especially auxiliary, for war, and it has been mentioned in Chapter VIII that

he originated the idea of the Territorial Army ; he fully recognized that conscription, no matter under what name, was out of the question. General von Gossler, the Minister of War, was talking to me one day about this subject, and remarked that no nation had ever adopted compulsory service until it had first been crushed in the field. We formed the exception to the rule in the Great War.

## CHAPTER XI

SOCIALISM had advanced with giant strides in Germany ever since the middle nineties, when it had been represented in the Reichstag by only a very few members, whereas by the dawn of the twentieth century the Party had become a very powerful factor in the State. Many of its adherents were drawn in the ordinary course of events for service in the ranks. Unlike France, the German Army was recruited territorially, except in the case of the Prussian Guard Corps, and in Alsace-Lorraine, where local political considerations had to be taken into account.

We have seen that the German Army, if criticized at all by foreigners, was to be spoken of only in terms of adulation, hence the suspicion had arisen that things might not be quite so perfect as Teutonic patriots wished other people to believe. Reports of ill-treatment of men by non-commissioned officers and even by officers had appeared occasionally in German newspapers, and some of them had been substantiated, but I never heard of a case in which the punishment of a bully was adequate to the offence.

I am, however, of opinion that gross instances were not of frequent occurrence, and it was usually the rural recruits who suffered ; they were not so quick intellectually as their comrades from the towns. If savage treatment had been the rule instead of the exception, its result must have come to light in the Great War, especially when there was no end to the titanic struggle in sight ; troops which had been cowed, and imbued with mutinous sentiments, would not have faced the terrible losses confronting them, and would have refused to be immolated. No officers of any army, even in time of peace, can compel soldiers to obey if these will not render obedience, and some of us



are aware of cases in time of peace where men who have not been brutally treated have mutinied, but they will not act thus unless their feelings have been strongly aroused. The German regulations for discipline were very much the same as our own ; nobody below the rank of a company commander was authorized to inflict any punishment at all, and anything of a serious nature had to be laid before the commanding officer. The fact nevertheless remains that the regulations were not invariably obeyed in Germany, and discipline, quite apart from cruelty, was very rigid indeed.

The 1st Army Corps, which had its Head-quarters at Königsberg, in East Prussia, had always been considered one of the most efficient, and the Emperor had told me the same thing about it. Nevertheless, there had been several scandals in it in 1901. One of its officers, a squadron leader, was murdered by one of his men, but months of investigation had failed to find the criminal, although report said that every trooper in the regiment knew who he was. Some time afterwards an officer belonging to another unit in the same corps was killed in a duel ; when intoxicated he had struck a brother-officer, who had insisted on helping him to his quarters, and the Court of Honour had ordered a meeting to take place. This brought down the Emperor's wrath ; the corps commander, and the commanding officer concerned, were retired, and several other officers suffered also. A friend of mine, a Staff Officer in East Prussia, was my informant.

When I was a boy at school in Berlin thirty years previously I was at a swimming-bath, and saw some men practising the art ; they had attained an advanced stage, and were in clothing with some impedimenta on them. One soldier was nearly exhausted, and made for the side of the pool—the water was too deep for him to find footing—before he had remained for the regulation period in the water. A subaltern in charge pushed him away with a pole, and nobody seemed to think this unusual. The man was not drowned, but had to be pulled out.

In connexion with the incidents just related we may go a little further. The social-democratic newspaper,

*Vorwärts*, published in Berlin, was often very annoying to the authorities, not only on account of its radical views, but also because it managed sometimes to acquire and disseminate information which it was desired to keep from the public. In the following instance, however, it merely developed what was already more or less generally known. In its issue of July 31, 1902, it devoted half of a double column to the maltreatment of soldiers in the German Army.

The incident quoted in the *Vorwärts* had caused more comment than usual, for it had been brought up in the Bavarian Chamber of Deputies during a discussion on the Bavarian Army Estimates. A Captain von Feilitzsch had maltreated no less than thirty-five soldiers during the Boxer expedition. The affair was also discussed in the Reichstag, where the Minister of War was unable to give any satisfactory explanation, and he was very angry in consequence! The facts were proved, and the Bavarian military authorities had refused to allow von Feilitzsch to rejoin his regiment after his return from China. He had been, however, transferred to the Prussian Army, and decorated besides with the Order of the Red Eagle. He had influence in some high quarter, which evidently approved of his methods.

The British Army was unique in Europe, owing to the real comradeship existing between officers and men. When the Duke of Connaught was about to leave St. Petersburg after the Coronation festivities at Moscow in 1896, the crew of the royal yacht gave an entertainment—songs and dances—on board. One of the Russian officers present expressed his amazement to me that such a spectacle was allowed to take place before any officer; happening as it did in the presence of a royal duke, it seemed to him outrageous. My explanation of our customs did not help him; he simply could not understand it.

Socialism had become, by November 1901, a seriously disturbing factor for the German authorities, whose bureaucratic methods to cope with it were not likely to be very successful. The military attachés were invited in

that month to attend the swearing-in of the annual contingent of recruits for the Guards at Potsdam. The Emperor was always present on these occasions, and the Lutheran and Catholic chaplains addressed the men before the oath of allegiance was administered to them.

The former spoke first and warned his "beloved recruits" against the dangers of Socialism; they must not be misled by "the Devil's advocates." He spoke at considerable length, but his address may be summarized by saying that he exhorted the recruits to consider neither the ties of family nor of friendship, but to render blind obedience to their superiors, or it would be the worse for them.

The Catholic chaplain was—shall we say—more polished and tactful, but the Emperor was evidently greatly pleased with his colleague's blunt words. The Russian military attaché, a pronounced Anglophobe, but an old friend of mine from my St. Petersburg days, was also much impressed by the tenor of the Lutheran address before foreign officers. Certainly the German military system was not well adapted to changes in social conditions, and an unpopular war might have crumbled it in pieces. In 1914 the circumstances were altogether different; everybody in and outside the army was aware that Germany was fighting for her very existence, and her bitterest foes must admit that she withstood the test magnificently.

The Army Estimates for 1902 were issued towards the end of the preceding year, and one item in them drew my attention at the time. Before the outbreak of the Boer War the heaviest guns used in the field or for siege purposes could not throw a shell which weighed more than about sixty-four pounds; the difficulty of transporting large guns was supposed to preclude their use. Our experience in South Africa, however, put a new complexion on the matter, and the Germans had been quick to note the fact. Their military authorities came to the conclusion in 1901 that foot—or, as we termed it, garrison artillery—would play a much more important part in a future war; guns of far greater power could be used. They decided therefore to increase the personnel by raising ten new

companies as a commencement, and from this small beginning was developed the amazing armament which caused such terrible and incredible damage in the Great War.

Krupp had manufactured a nine-inch gun before 1867 ; it was considered a monster in those days, and visitors to the great Paris Exhibition in that year were greatly impressed by its size. They were not aware that the weapon which they saw was a dummy, as the difficulties of transport had prevented the conveyance of the original to the French capital on account of its weight. I remember the exhibit well, and my Lycée comrades were not at all perturbed, as the unanimous conclusion was that such a terrific thing could never be utilized in land warfare. But the Germans were always patient and tireless seekers after progress in military matters ; they were quick to learn from the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 what field works on an extensive scale are worth. Further modest additions to the number of machine guns were also to be made in 1902 ; there were to be seventy-two in all by the end of that year, want of sufficient money precluding a greater number, whereas in 1914 there must have been thousands of them.

Statistics are a wearisome subject, but a few clear ones may perhaps be given as showing the extent to which compulsory service affected the youth of Germany, and the hatred which a large proportion of those liable to be called up in time of peace felt for it. For the typical year 1901, 1,618,612 young men were liable for service on land or afloat. Of these 698,256 had completed twenty years (the normal age), 471,781 twenty-one, and 864,269 twenty-two, while 89,856 were older. Those above the normal age for colour service were men who had been put back from former years for medical or some other special reasons.

Of the 1,618,612 the addresses of 49,244 were not known ; 86,722 absented themselves without leave ; 564,127 were put back to a later year ; 1,219 were ineligible (criminals past or present), and 41,882 were no longer liable to colour service. These figures made a total of 742,644 ; hence there remained 875,968 from which the contingent of

228,406 was drawn by lot. Of the remainder 100,071 were posted to the Landsturm, 83,546 to the army Ersatz reserve, 1,308 to the naval Ersatz reserve, and 13,674 remained supernumerary. This left 448,963, who were classed as being on furlough.

Of the 228,406 recruits, 99,310 were twenty, 54,615 were twenty-one, 71,998 twenty-two, and 2,488 were older. The contingent was drafted as follows: 215,479 to combatant troops of the Army, 4,701 to non-combatant duties, and 8,226 to the navy. In addition, 21,492 and 1,778 youths joined the Army and Navy respectively as volunteers before they were liable for service, and these figures included the one-year volunteers of the Army. All young men, no matter how high in rank, who had the requisite educational attainments, joined for one year instead of risking being drawn by lot to serve for two, or three years. The unauthorized emigrants totalled 173,418, or 10 per cent. of the total number liable, and three-fourths of the contingent required; this figure shows the extreme distaste of a very considerable proportion of the young male population for military service, 10 per cent. or so being prepared to undergo future punishment, or to abandon their civil rights in the Fatherland, rather than be a soldier. Any who returned thither even as American citizens were liable to trial for desertion, and few risked this.

Compulsory service, however, did not fall heavily on the population as a whole. In 1901 the number of inhabitants in the empire exceeded 57 millions, of whom more than 28 millions were males, while the authorized peace strength of the Army was 495,500, exclusive of about 80,000 non-commissioned officers. In 1880 the German Navy had about 7,000 men, whereas at the end of 1901 its recruits and volunteers alone numbered 9,999.

The only real burden on the citizens lay in their liability to serve, if required, for the national defence. It was the educated classes which were caught, with this enormous advantage to the country, namely, they provided an immense number of well-qualified reserve officers and non-commissioned officers available on mobilization.

## CHAPTER XII

At the commencement of January 1902 I was honoured by being commanded to stay with the King and Queen at Sandringham, where I spent a delightful visit, but although my intentions were of course the best, I commenced badly.

Princess Victoria, Princess Charles of Denmark (now Queen of Norway), and some members of the house-party were having tea at the time of my arrival, and some of us began to smoke afterwards. Presently his Majesty entered the room and engaged me in conversation; we were at the end away from the fireplace, and no ash-tray was in my immediate neighbourhood; as he was not smoking I thought it would be impolite for me to do so, and I placed my cigarette on the edge of an adjoining wooden table, calculating that the Sovereign would dismiss me before the flame reached it. We talked about a number of subjects until I became uneasy about the lighted tobacco. Presently I turned my head sideways to glance at it, and discovered to my horror that the burning end was blackening the edge. At the same instant the King's eyes followed the direction of mine, and he said: "You had better take up your cigarette, or the table will be burnt!" Few hosts would have taken my act in such a kindly manner, but nobody was ever more considerate than their Majesties.

I have now lived so long out of the big world that I do not know its present-day customs, but observe from Lady Oxford's delightful and recent book, *Lay Sermons*, that guests are now often in the habit of placing or throwing lighted cigarettes in all directions without regard to the danger of fire and the damage to other peoples' belongings, and like King Edward she does not approve of the practice.

The Prince and Princess of Wales came to dinner, and his Royal Highness had a long conversation with me afterwards, much of it relating to German affairs. He was to visit Berlin on the occasion of the Emperor's birthday on January 27 in pursuance of a long-standing invitation, and the attitude of the latter's officials and Press towards England was well known to everybody here.

It was mentioned in Chapter VI that foreign diplomatists are sometimes so occupied with their own intrigues that they fail to appreciate the effect of their words on other nations, and a case in point is worth recording. In November 1901 Mr. Chamberlain had spoken at a great meeting in Edinburgh about the falsehoods disseminated by the German Press about our army in South Africa. He merely stated the fact that our system of dealing with Boers who wrecked trains, fired on our men from farm-houses flying the white flag, or committed other acts contrary to the usages of war, was not one bit more severe than the methods adopted by the Germans themselves in the Franco-German campaign in 1870-71.

The Colonial Secretary had spoken nothing but the truth, but his speech was considered in some quarters in London to have been "most unfortunate," and the late Lord Sanderson, then the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, told me that he did wish Mr. Chamberlain would leave foreign affairs out of his orations. Perhaps he was thinking of the latter's speech on Russia in 1898, when he remarked that he who sups with the Devil needs a long spoon! But should we swallow astounding falsehoods about ourselves without making an occasional thrust in return? Think how we are maligned to-day.

The account of the Colonial Secretary's speech which had been transmitted to the German newspapers had grossly misrepresented it, and aroused a howl of fury throughout their country. It was the comparison, and the idea of being identified with the "atrocities" which our troops were accused of practising on Boer women and children—making these march in front of them so as to prevent the enemy from shooting—which raised the

storm. My wife told a German friend that they charged us with doing what Germans would do if the opportunity should present itself!

The King had informed me that I was to be in attendance on the Prince of Wales during his forthcoming visit to Berlin. The prospect of it was not alluring in view of the flood of disgusting abuse scattered by many German newspapers about England and her Royal Family.

A day or two after my visit to Sandringham had terminated the Chancellor, Bülow, made his celebrated speech on January 8, in which he vilified not only Mr. Chamberlain, but the British Army as well, declaring it to be an insult to compare it with the German. The result was to provoke an uproar in this country. Mr. Chamberlain answered Bülow three days later at Birmingham; he retracted nothing of what he had said at Edinburgh, and certainly had no intention of taking a lesson in manners from a man like the Chancellor. The Colonial Secretary was the better swordsman, and again made the Germans squeal.

Serious trouble was certain to follow Bülow's speech, which had been aggravated by the Emperor writing a letter to King Edward abusing Mr. Chamberlain, and everybody was naturally very indignant. It was believed that Bülow would not have dared to insult our troops unless he had imperial permission to do so. King Edward was twenty years older than his nephew, and, as we in England thought, King and Emperor of a far finer empire than Germany. His Majesty wrote to the Kaiser that the Prince of Wales had, perhaps, better not visit Berlin lest there should be hostile demonstrations in the streets.

No reply to the King's letter had been received when I left London on January 19; the ambassador told me on the following evening that, as he had heard nothing about one, he imagined the Emperor had dispatched it direct to his Majesty. I said that unless a satisfactory answer should be sent, I did not think the Prince would come; but his Excellency did not see how in the circumstances he could avoid this. Meanwhile, orders for the reception



of his Royal Highness had been published, and the ambassador naturally became very uneasy.

His Excellency was in a very unpleasant position, he told me ; he wondered whether the letter had been lost, as such things had happened, in which case, he said, King Edward might think he had purposely withheld it. My absolute conviction was that neither his Majesty nor anybody else would ever entertain any idea of the kind, and events showed that I was right.

Time was passing, and January 22 was the anniversary of Queen Victoria's death, so there was a Memorial Service in the English Church, at which the Emperor was present. After the ceremony was over, I was with the ambassador when he inquired from his Majesty whether he had received a letter from King Edward.

"No," was the reply ; "indeed I had rather expected one."

It struck me at the time what a perfect actor he was, and Lascelles then told him of it, and accompanied the Emperor to the Palace, where he showed him a copy of the letter. In the afternoon the Emperor visited the ambassador, read his answer, and dispatched it on the same evening by a special messenger to Windsor. The ambassador also telegraphed its purport, the gist of it being the expression of the Emperor's affection for England, and that he would go into the matter of Bülow's speech later with the Chancellor, and see what could be done. It was rather a flimsy production, but constructed a frail bridge which might be utilized.

The Emperor was so upset at the idea that the Prince of Wales might not come that he declared he would withdraw his ambassador from London if his olive branch were not accepted, because all arrangements had been made for a most imposing reception.

Public opinion in England would undoubtedly have firmly supported the Sovereign and the Cabinet if the visit had been abandoned. Bülow had made a fool of himself. He was so busy with his own schemes that he had not, I believe, foreseen the inevitable effect of his language in England, for he certainly did not desire war nor even

really strained relations with her, yet went the best way to work to get them. Even if so astute a man, as he was, credited the German reports of Mr. Chamberlain's speech, he could have expressed himself differently; but his own mind must have been as unclean as that of his newspaper men, and he probably thought his language had only been somewhat tart; he could easily have read the Colonial Secretary's words in any English journal.

My conviction was—and still is—that the Kaiser had received the letter promptly, and King Edward among others held the same view. It will be remembered that when his Majesty, then the Prince of Wales, gave me a letter of introduction to his nephew, the latter received me on a busy morning within twenty-four hours after my arrival at the railway station in Berlin.

On this occasion the matter was of the greatest official importance, and the King's letter manœuvred the Emperor into a very awkward position; he certainly wished to avoid a public quarrel, while simultaneously he desired for domestic political reasons to avoid disavowing the Chancellor. He had decided therefore to call a bluff, but unfortunately for the gambler it did not come off. If he had not received King Edward's letter he would have been frantic with the underling concerned, no matter who he was; but he wasn't, and it would scarcely have been possible to devise a lamer explanation. This was that the emissary from the Embassy had handed the document to a footman, who placed it in his quarters, and as he was to proceed on his holiday on the following morning he had forgotten all about the missive! Just imagine this happening in the case of the servant of such a master. The consequence of the imbroglio was that the Prince of Wales was very nearly prevented by the time factor from coming to Berlin after all. Lascelles's telegram giving the substance of the Kaiser's explanation did not solve the problem, as the King was resolved to await the delivery of his nephew's reply before allowing the Prince of Wales to start on his journey, and the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, supported his Majesty in this.

The Emperor's letter, dispatched by special messenger

from Berlin on the night of January 22, reached London rather late on the following evening, and then a special train conveyed its bearer to Windsor, where he arrived about midnight. As his Royal Highness was obliged to leave London on January 24, if he was to be present at the banquet arranged in his honour on the following day, it is obvious that there was not an hour to be lost if a very serious situation was to be avoided; if he had not gone, then the whole affair would have become common knowledge at a time when public opinion in England was thoroughly aroused against Germany.

Lord Salisbury said he was very sorry that the Prince of Wales should be obliged to go to Berlin; indeed the Prime Minister even thought it a little undignified, but the visit could not now be avoided. This was of course the case, short of telling the Emperor that his statements were believed to be false. The late Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, was greatly relieved when the affair was smoothed over.

Mention is made elsewhere in these pages of the different angles from which British and Germans sometimes viewed the same subject, and it may be that the Emperor never imagined what an impossible situation his Chancellor had created until our view was forced upon his notice; nevertheless, the fact remains that German officials were at times exceedingly rude, and were not only astonished but very angry when their uncouthness was resented. It may therefore be concluded that they felt themselves at liberty to say what pleased them, while their hearers were expected not even to look sour.

The late Field-Marshal Lord Nicholson, then Director of Military Intelligence, had a long conversation with me during my next visit to England, in February, about German affairs. Like everybody else whom I saw in this country, he was not only furious with the Chancellor, Bülow, for his offensive speeches in the Reichstag in January—there had been two, one a shade less insulting than that of January 8—but he, as well as the others, ascribed their tone to the Emperor. Nicholson indeed declared that the ambassador should have cancelled an

invitation to dinner which the Chancellor had accepted before he broadcasted his calumnies.

I thought public opinion in England was right, and am of the same mind still. The Kaiser, who was overbearing at times, did not always realize the construction which must be placed upon his utterances or those of his Ministers, and an uncompromising attitude on our part, devoid of vulgarity, was the best way to meet these challenges. Richthofen, the Foreign Minister, was of so gentle a disposition that he was always most courteous, and besides he had had practical experience of our upright methods when he was in Egypt.

The Germans looked at the incident of January from one point of view only ; the Kaiser's plans for the reception of the Prince of Wales, once they had been published, must on no account be upset ; it would be a gross insult to Germany. His Royal Highness, on the other hand, an officer in the British Army, was expected to visit the capital immediately after the principal Minister of the German Empire had outraged our army in the vilest language, and while the Prussian princes were Anglo-phobes. British feelings must not be considered at all.

The Emperor should have written at once to his uncle expressing real regret, and promising to make reparation ; his omission to do this—leaving the King's letter out of account for the moment—was bound to make people believe that he was prepared to go to great, indeed unheard-of, lengths so as to further some policy of his own.

There were, however, others who did not hold the view which has been given ; in fact, I was in a very small minority in diplomatic circles. "Such a charming gentleman as the Emperor is, would be incapable of the chicanery of pretending that he had not received King Edward's letter." These words give the substance of the other side's opinion, but then the case in point was a matter of business and not of sentiment. My readers must judge for themselves. At any rate, the Kaiser felt that I regarded him as suspect in the matter, and never resented the fact. The maze of international diplomacy was bound to lead sometimes to the most unfortunate incidents, and proof

of this has been afforded more than once since the Great War.

A great tactical error was committed by dispatching such an important document as King Edward's letter from the Embassy by the hands of a chancery servant; this was much too casual a manner in which to treat it, for it gave the Kaiser his chance, as he saw the case; he had never dreamt that the Chancellor's challenge would be taken up in the manner indicated, and he thought that by ignoring the letter the affair would blow over. On every occasion when a letter for the Emperor passed through my hands my invariable rule was to ask for an audience and deliver it directly into his Majesty's hand. I suppose the idea had never occurred to the secretary of Embassy concerned that the King's letter might—let us say—go astray, but the fate of Queen Victoria's telegram of December 1900 to her grandson begging him not to receive President Kruger should have impelled the adoption of every precaution in this particular instance.

The Prince of Wales, and his suite, consisting of the late Lord Wenlock, Sir William Carington, and Captain Sir Charles Cust, were met by me at the frontier station, Herbesthal, and they arrived at Berlin in the evening of January 25. Very elaborate precautions had been taken by the authorities, and, except for a few isolated cries of "*Hoch die Buren*" (The Boers for ever) there was no hostile demonstration as he proceeded to the palace in Unter den Linden, nor at any other period of his visit. The Kaiser met his Royal Highness at the railway station, where the reception was in Full State.

We all dined at the Palace very soon after arrival, and on my way thither I told the ambassador that the Prince of Wales would like to see him later in the evening. After dinner was over his Royal Highness had a conversation with the Chancellor, who, as I heard afterwards from German sources, felt rather unhappy about it. It seemed to me very fortunate that the Prince had come to Berlin so that he could meet Bülow.

The following day was taken up with a number of more or less minor matters except that the Prince of Wales,

the Emperor, Sir Frank Lascelles, and I lunched with Queen Victoria's Dragoons of the Guard. This was an important function, which had been arranged some time beforehand. The Kaiser was in great spirits, an expression, as it appeared to me, of his relief that his royal guest was actually in Berlin. The Emperor spoke in affectionate terms about his cousin, and he had also led the ambassador to believe that he would allude in laudatory language to the British Army, but he omitted this part of his programme if such had been originally his intention.

Greatly to my surprise, he drank my health twice; this was an unprecedented compliment, I believe, and showed that my remark concerning intervention in the Boer War, and my promise that we should endeavour then to drag down Germany, had not rankled. Normally the Emperor lived in a false atmosphere, and found it refreshing when people did not grovel before his outbursts. His Majesty likewise bestowed on me the Star of the Order of the Crown of Prussia, which elevated me at once to the rank of an Excellency in Germany—a very coveted position indeed there.

The luncheon also gave the Emperor an opportunity of perpetrating a jest at the expense of our military authorities. One of the principal reforms which appeared as a consequence of the war in South Africa had been a change in the uniform worn by staff officers, and a very costly alteration it was. A new pattern of tunic had been introduced, and in a place like Berlin I used to have three; at the Memorial Service for Queen Victoria I wore her old uniform for the last time as the occasion was a suitable one, whereas for the luncheon I had put on the new pattern. The imperial eye noticed the change and inquired the reason, which pleased him, but he added that the level of intelligence of the British military authorities must be woefully low if it could not rise higher than a change in clothes.

January 27, the Kaiser's birthday, was a very busy day. The programme commenced with Divine Service in the Palace Chapel, with a very long and dull sermon. Then there was an official reception by the Emperor, who

received the congratulations in turn of those present. I had been talking to one of the minor German princes when his Majesty entered the Throne-room, and did not notice the fact, but my collocutor quickly made me realize that I was on the wrong side of the room. This ceremony was followed by the Parade of Colours at the Arsenal opposite the Palace. In the afternoon the Emperor left cards on the ambassadors, and this gave rise once to an amusing piece of stupidity on the part of a German hall porter at the Embassy.

Every ambassador had a book in which ordinary visitors inscribed their names and addresses, or else this was done for them by the hall porter; he always, of course, did this in the case of anybody of high rank. On one occasion the imperial footman descended from the box of the Kaiser's carriage, left the card, which had "Wilhelm II" on it, and was returning to his seat when the porter ran after him, and said, "*Bitte die Wohnung!*" (Please, where does he live?)

There was a great banquet in the evening of January 27 at the Palace, which was attended by about a couple of hundred guests. One of the features of the Court of Berlin was the perfect manner in which a big dinner was served. There was no hurry or confusion, yet less than an hour sufficed from start to finish; of course these faultless arrangements necessitated an army of servants. The Prince of Wales had heard of this quick dispatch, and had brought over one of his household to study the system and introduce it into England. All of us older ones remember the dreary length of time spent on these functions in days gone by. The method adopted at the Russian Court was quicker even than that at Berlin, but it was too fast, for if a guest should happen to lay a knife and fork on his plate, this was immediately snatched away, so you might get up hungry if you did not make the most of your opportunity.

Official royal visits were a very heavy tax on the visitor. When the Prince of Wales came to Berlin he brought with him a chest full of valuable presents, and it fell to me to suggest a selection appropriate to the rank of

the various recipients, who might be general officers or station masters. When everything was laid out ready for distribution, I counted the gifts, and told his Royal Highness that there was one too many. He said he was aware of that, and had added another which he intended to present. The Germans concerned, who happened to be in Berlin, were then called in in turn. The Prince spoke very kindly to each as he handed over the gift, and when the room had been cleared he said the extra one had always been intended for me, and this had accounted for my error in counting; of course it had never entered my head that I was to be honoured in this manner. His Royal Highness thanked me in the most cordial terms for the help which he was pleased to say I had given him, and I replied that it had been not only a duty but a very great pleasure to have been of some trifling assistance. I really cannot describe how nicely it was done by the Prince. The gift was a gold cigarette-case, which is of course an irreplaceable treasure.

The Emperor had appointed his Royal Highness Chief of a regiment of cuirassiers—in other words, of giants—stationed at Cologne; his Majesty had a fondness for officers and men of unusually big physique, whose brains were not, however, always on a par with their build. It was a rather clumsy compliment.

The Prince of Wales's official visit terminated when the celebrations of January 27 came to an end, but he wished to pay a private visit to the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; he was very fond of them, and she was a sister of the Duke of Cambridge. The Emperor came to the station to see the Prince of Wales off, and entered also into conversation with me. He did not mention King Edward's letter, but the general tone of his conversation left no doubt in my mind that he was thinking of it. He also said he was so sorry to part from me if only for a very brief period, and passing his hand over his eyes he declared that he felt inclined to cry at the prospect! The fact was, no doubt, that the Prince's visit to Berlin must have been an enormous relief to his Majesty. All's well that ends well, however, and if we



get down to first causes we see that Secret Diplomacy has much to answer for in embroiling national and family relations; its rumours helped to render the Germans furious with us by making them attribute the bad state of trade to our greed, which did not stop at declaring war on a couple of peaceful, petty, Republics.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was practically blind, and both he and his wife were well over eighty. They were most friendly, but although our visit was a very brief one, a matter of hours, it was long enough to enable me to startle both them and myself. I must have been wool-gathering, an occupation in which I indulge only too frequently: we were all in the drawing-room, and I saw some figures in the distance; thinking of other matters, I strolled towards them, only to be brought up with a crash. I had only seen their reflections, and had collided violently—one can do this even when moving quite slowly—with a great glass door through which I was endeavouring to pass; fortunately for everybody concerned it held firm, but the Grand Duke was naturally curious as to what had caused the crash!

He asked me something at luncheon about the Kaiser, and I hesitated before replying; the relations existing between him and William II were unknown to me, and naturally I was anxious not to appear impertinent. Besides, my wife, who always had much more sense than her husband, had specially warned me to abstain from proffering any opinions! My answer had been that I would endeavour to keep my tongue in check if this should be possible; if, however, direct questions should be put to me she had agreed that the replies must be unambiguous. In this instance at Mecklenburg-Strelitz, however, the query was merely a personal and not an official one, and the Grand Duke, noticing my hesitation, remarked:

“You may say what you like about him in this house!”

It is pleasant to recall after all those years another instance of the Prince of Wales's kindly consideration and sympathy for others. The King's commands to me had been that I was to accompany his Royal Highness as far

as the frontier after leaving Berlin. Somebody had told the Prince of my wife's illness, and it was characteristic of his thoughtfulness that he said I need not, in the circumstances, travel with him beyond Potsdam. My return to the capital would otherwise have been delayed for another day and a half.

Sir Frank Lascelles, accompanied by his military adviser—or hired assassin, as that delightfully witty diplomatist, the late Sir Cecil Spring Rice, called me—dined with the Emperor and Empress on February 5. His Majesty was in very good spirits, and asked me what the Prince of Wales had thought of his visit. The fact was that the preliminaries to it formed the really important part, while the four days' duration of his stay had been very fully occupied from start to finish, and his Royal Highness had not expressed any opinion to me on the subject in Berlin. The Emperor knew that he was very fortunate in having induced King Edward and Lord Salisbury to sanction the Prince's journey, so I merely replied to his question by saying that the visit had been a happy termination to a very embarrassing situation, and the subject dropped, the Kaiser turning the conversation into other channels. He mentioned that he had ordered all the correspondence relating to the affair to be destroyed, and said the incident was to be entirely forgotten, and regarded as if it had never occurred.

It was rumoured in social circles in Berlin that a violent quarrel had taken place between King Edward and the Kaiser, but, as in the case of many other indiscretions of the great, the general public was quite ignorant of what had happened.

A little personal incident affecting myself had occurred in connexion with the Prince of Wales's visit, which caused some people to think that the Emperor had gone out of his way to show undue friendship for England in an official manner. Captain Paulis was the Russian naval attaché, so that our relative rank was the same. He came to me after his Royal Highness had left Berlin, and was very much upset because the Star of the Order of the Crown had been conferred upon me, an insignificant pawn

on the political chessboard, and one which was certainly no bigger than he was.

The proper decoration for my rank was, he said quite truly, merely the second class, without the Star, of the Order of the Red Eagle, the next higher decoration after the same class of the Crown Order which I already possessed. His grievance was well founded, but I told him he must make allowances; the invectives hurled against my country by the Chancellor and his Press really meant nothing at all; they had indeed been clumsy and vulgar, but that was only because the Germans were less polished than the British, while the outstanding fact remained that their outbursts, if they did not evince love, undoubtedly showed jealousy and enormous envy, which were really quite as valuable.

Moreover, I said, the Emperor had a great affection for England and had manifested it in a unique manner, for it was contrary to all precedent for the heir to the throne of a foreign Power to be invited to Berlin on the occasion of his Majesty's birthday, and the Kaiser, by breaking with tradition, had shown in the most striking manner possible his love for England and her Royal Family. No doubt, I added, the Emperor wished to impress all this on Berlin by honouring me who lived there in such an exceptional manner. Altogether I was rather pleased with my explanation, which was certain to be the subject of considerable comment, while it did not make Paulis any happier.

There was no subsequent display of official Anglophobia after the Prince of Wales had left, and my belief is that the Chancellor was alarmed lest a recrudescence of it should do Germany much more harm than good. He sailed pretty near the wind once or twice, but was careful not to go too far. He had an excellent reason for caution, for he was aware that any fresh official manifestations would entail very serious consequences. King Edward had resolved, with Lord Salisbury's approval, to break with the Kaiser altogether if any more official calumnies should be perpetrated; in other words, plain speaking is sometimes the best method of easing a tense situation.

## CHAPTER XIII

**THE** Emperor held a Court on January 21, three days prior to my departure to join the Prince of Wales at the frontier. This function marked the opening of the Berlin season, and the stage-management was magnificent, as might be expected in the greatest military capital of the world. The Court fixed for the preceding year, 1901, had been abandoned owing to the illness and death of Queen Victoria.

On arriving at the Palace, the ladies assembled in a large saloon, and when the doors leading into the Throne-room were thrown open they advanced between two long lines of court pages to where the Emperor and Empress were standing; each of them then made her curtsy and passed on. Sir Frank Lascelles being a widower, our ladies who were to be presented officially, namely the late Lady Georgina Buchanan and my wife, followed the Austrian ambassadress, who was the senior of her rank; she took up her position by the side of the Empress after making her bow, and named the ladies in succession. The ceremony was very short and easy, and they only curtsied twice.

The spectacle was a very brilliant one; the regulations for ladies' dresses laid down that these were to have long trains, cut very low off the shoulders, and no dark colours were permitted. When mourning was ordered to be worn by German ladies of high position, it was, as mentioned in Chapter VII, of the most severe type imaginable, and seemed to date, judging by its materials and fashion, from pre-empire days. But ancients like myself remember the time when men attending a funeral in England had their tall hats swathed in broad, dismal, black silk bands with streamers many feet in length.

The Kaiser wore a set scowl at these Courts, and the reason for this may perhaps be explained. His Majesty called on the ambassador on the day after this particular function to arrange about inducing the Prince of Wales to pay his promised visit. After finishing his business with his Excellency he asked to see the ladies, the late Lady Edward Cavendish (Sir Frank's sister), Lady Ormonde, who was staying at the Embassy, and Miss Lascelles, now Lady Spring Rice. The Emperor could be very fascinating when it suited him, and besides he was no doubt anxious on this particular occasion to create the best possible atmosphere after the trouble, not yet over, in connexion with King Edward's letter; we all know the immense influence which is sometimes exercised by delightful ladies.

The Kaiser remained until dinner-time; he declared that ours was by far the finest Embassy in Berlin (meaning the staff), and that the curtsies of the ladies were something to wonder at. He was also glad of the opportunity to talk to Lady Ormonde; he was genuinely fond of her, and she looked beautiful at the Court. Part of his conversation with her was something like this:

"What business had you to come up grinning?"

"I never even smiled, your Majesty; you looked so severe that I had to look severe too."

"I have to look ferocious," replied the Kaiser, "because if I should not do so I would often be obliged to laugh; many of you are so funny."

The truth was that the diplomatic corps at Berlin was of huge dimensions, and was therefore bound to contain some exotics, as he used to term them. A more detailed description of Court and private entertainments will be found in Chapter XVIII.

A few remarks on social and domestic affairs may perhaps be included here, as one thing leads to another. Servants' wages were very low, compared with our ideas, at the commencement of the twentieth century. For example, a really good cook might receive fifteen pounds annually; other servants such as footmen only received very trifling sums, but then they expected to be given a

present by every lady or gentleman whom they admitted, or whose cloak they took at a party. In this manner they must have been very well paid, especially in a big house, where there was much entertaining. Diplomats paid much higher wages, and so far as I know one was not expected to tip their domestics. There was at least one exception to the German rule : on the first occasion when we stayed with the late Prince Blücher of Wahlstatt he expressly asked us not to give his household staff anything, as they were all well paid ; he waived this rule, he said, only if a guest was chamois shooting. I remember asking the late Sir Sidney Greville about the proper scale to give at Sandringham in King Edward's lifetime, and he told me I was not to give any tips ; I already knew that his Majesty greatly disliked the custom.

On one occasion when my wife and I were calling at the Palace in Berlin, and the Empress happened to drive up, a couple of—we imagined—scullerymaids happened to come out ; they were untidily dressed, according to our notions, for the afternoon, but nobody was taken aback ; it was all very homely. The servants' quarters on the Continent were very bad indeed.

Generally speaking, etiquette ruled everything in social matters in Germany. In each drawing-room there was a sofa in addition to high-backed chairs, and the former was reserved by an unwritten, but unbreakable, law for ladies whose husbands were "Excellencies." Similarly, young married women were not supposed to wear plumage as gaudy as that of their elders, but Princess Daisy Pless was a law unto herself ; her father-in-law was one of the magnates of the empire, and she was a daughter of the late Colonel Cornwallis West. The Kaiser, like everybody else who was not jaundiced, admired her immensely.

At a State performance at the opera in Berlin she wore blue feathers instead of the usual white ones, a chain of diamonds round her shoulders as if they formed the collar of a great order of knighthood, and a magnificent tiara. It is no exaggeration to say that she looked absolutely splendid, as well as lovely, which indeed she always was. On this occasion her superb appearance literally enraged

some of the elderly Excellencies ; they declared that it was positively indecent and impudent of her to be adorned with jewels of a splendour suitable only for those of themselves who might be lucky enough to possess them. Indeed some of these highly placed dames vowed that they would remonstrate with the Kaiser about the impropriety of her appearance ; but if they did, I am sure they received no satisfaction. They could scarcely object officially to her looks, although she was the most beautiful sight in the house where there were many sweet faces.

It was not always possible, or at any rate easy, to avoid falling into some social pitfall in a new city where one encountered such heaps of fresh acquaintances. One evening we met a lady at some party and did the correct thing on the following day by calling ; she was out, as it was not her " day," so we left cards. On the night before the lady had been attired in bright colours, and something must have caused us to think that she was married ; neither of us could verify this by looking at her hand, as she was wearing gloves, and we were usually careful to prime ourselves beforehand. The lady promptly left cards in return, but they were bordered with an edging of black about half an inch in width. Inquiry showed that her husband had been killed in a duel comparatively recently ; he had been jealous of some man, called him out, and lost his life ; the lady was not a very nice character, and had abandoned mourning cards some time before, until this occasion.

I did a socially dreadful thing one day, but good sometimes comes out of evil. We had a young and very attractive friend who was lady in waiting to a foreign Royal Highness who was married to a German prince. I must have been presented to her at some time, but had completely forgotten what she looked like—I remember her now ! Our little friend did not at all care for her mode of life, and besides she was not strong, but her parents, great people themselves, wished their daughter to be in a royal household.

She told my wife one day what a hard life she led ; there were, of course, endless things to arrange, and she had to

play lawn-tennis, often when she was very tired or not feeling well, but she did not dare to ask to be excused. Some time afterwards there was a function at Potsdam at which a number of ladies of the Court were present, and I came across two of them, one being our young countess, while I knew the other's face, but did not place her. I shook the former by the hand and bowed to the other—on the Continent it is the male who makes the advance—and then said: "I do hope you are being more kindly treated, and are not being continually bothered to play tennis."

It occurred to me at the time that her response to my greeting was rather constrained, and I asked somebody who her companion was. Of course she turned out to be the Royal Highness! But the result of my breach of decorum was entirely satisfactory; the princess no doubt realized that I had not recognized her, and we heard afterwards that the lot of our friend had been much alleviated. It had never occurred to her mistress that anybody could feel tired or unwell if she herself possessed rude health.

Newspaper attacks did not cease after the Prince of Wales had left Berlin, nor did public opinion undergo a change for the better, and I was fortunate in having German connexions whence I could ascertain the true state of affairs, with the result that the future looked to me black as regarded Anglo-German relations. Perhaps I may anticipate somewhat, and give a few instances in support of this view.

Apart from the political animus against England in Germany during the three years, 1900-3, which I spent in that country, the industrial situation was also largely responsible for the latter's hatred—there is no other word for it—of this empire. Trade was bad, and large numbers of persons were unemployed, who took their cue from the Press, which laid much of the blame for this on Britain's greed, which had led her to disturb the peace of the world. Foreigners do not take us at our own valuation.

The Emperor had spoken to me, on May 29, 1901, about the strong feeling against Germany—or himself—in the United States. He and his Government were, of course,



very anxious to remedy this state of affairs, and in making the attempt they endeavoured to create bad blood between England and the great Republic. Within a month after the Prince of Wales had left Berlin the German Government adopted the most unusual course of publishing a British dispatch without consulting the British Foreign Office.

Every German read the newspapers which remained bitterly hostile to us, and most people are influenced by what an editor tells them. In railway trains I frequently heard astonishing and wicked falsehoods uttered about England ; passengers discussed them, and believed them, because the papers had said so.

It was the same thing in high social circles. Prince Carolath, a Prussian peer, was very fond of dining with the ambassador, and he put his name to an appeal on behalf of the Boers in the concentration camps. Nobody could have criticized him for this if the appeal had not been couched in highly offensive terms. He ought to have refused to dine with the representative of such a criminal nation as England, but Sir Frank's dinners were uncommonly good.

Anti-British fury seemed to be quite as malignant in Vienna as in Berlin. A member of one of the greatest houses in Austria—whose head regarded with contempt anybody of lower rank than a baron with sixteen quarterings which he could prove—wrote to my wife in April, 1902, that hostility towards England could not possibly be any stronger in Berlin than in Vienna. Her relations gulped down greedily what was said in the Press, and our friend restrained herself with difficulty from saying : " You fools, why don't you learn the truth ? " She could not very well express her feelings to her uncle, aunt, and cousins, whose joy over an English reverse was really comical.

My wife was talking to a friend of hers, a German lady whose husband was an officer on the General Staff, and remarked that she supposed England was really disliked in Germany. The answer was : " Dislike is not the word ; you never were beloved, but now you are hated ; the

detestation of the French was never half so strong." She added that the mere mention of England in German military circles invariably evoked abuse.

Two young English ladies were crossing a square in Berlin towards the end of the winter in 1902; snow had fallen, and a number of youths, hearing them speaking their own language, pelted them with snowballs amid the encouraging remarks of respectable citizens.

A Russian lady was in a railway compartment with a German nobleman and his wife, with neither of whom she was acquainted, but she knew them by sight. Our friend was reading an English book and the other two travellers, observing this, began to abuse the British Army in no measured terms.

The ambassador gave a ball. An entertainment of this kind was always greatly looked forward to by many German officers, but some of those in King Edward's Dragoons of the Guard refused their invitations on account of their hatred of England. This was told to me by a senior officer in the regiment, who was a personal friend of mine. If the commanding officer had had an inkling of this intended manifestation of feeling he would have ordered the young gentlemen to attend the ball.

I was fishing one day at Weimar, and my wife was sitting some distance away from me on the grass, reading. A parcel of students went and stood near her, and recognizing or guessing that she was British called out several times: "*Ach, Engländerin*" (Ah, Englishwoman). After this had gone on for a short time she retorted by saying; "*Ja, Gott, sei Dank*" (Yes, thank God). This so surprised them that they gave her up as hopeless, and left the spot.

Sometimes a German in society, or holding high office, would tell a diplomatist that bitterness of feeling was rare, and would disappear when the war, then nearing its conclusion, should be over. Assurances of this kind were often accepted, but diplomatists pass practically the whole of their lives abroad, and their training naturally predisposes them to credit, or pretend to credit, such statements, perhaps as being the easiest way out of a difficulty.

It would be hypercritical to lay undue stress on the fact

that, when the idea of an Anglo-German alliance evaporated, the Germans worked out a scheme for the invasion of England by 800,000 men. Their Great General Staff had, of course, plans for all possible contingencies, but this fact was emphasized by another one, which may be summarized as follows : " Let us build up a big fleet and make England pay for it." My view still is that an alliance would have been the only practical security for peace. When the negotiations fell through, Germans of all sections of society, the lower ones being prompted by those higher up, were led to believe that we were working against their country with the object of ruining their trade. War then seemed to be only a question of the not distant future. Failing alliance with Germany, whose Army was immensely superior in administration and training to that of any other nation in the world, my preference was for us to pull our own chestnuts out of the fire single-handed.

There were, of course, individual Germans who heartily lamented the unhappy state of affairs ; the late Baron von Richthofen, Foreign Secretary for many years until his lamented death, was one of them, and he always exerted his influence as a steady factor.

It must also be remembered that the general mass of Germans, while they had come to hate us, would never have voted for war merely for its own sake. They are an exceedingly intelligent people, as everybody who is not blinded by prejudice is aware ; but their newspapers published unpalatable truths besides fulminating against England. The population had increased in the thirty years following the Franco-German War by nearly 50 per cent., from 40 to about 60 millions. While other European nations were expanding overseas, every possible obstacle was thrown in the German path when Germany felt the necessity of expanding territorially, or commercially, by means of foreign concessions. In Asia and in Africa it was the same thing, and any German gains were usually obtained only after bitter struggles, while her opponents had not always clean hands. What is surprising is that some educated men and women should have applauded the gross indecencies of part of their Press.

These attacks continued ; it may be that the venom of the German newspaper men was nourished to some extent by their mode of life ; too much rich living and no exercise rendered them perhaps liverish and distorted their mental vision. The Emperor asked me one day whether I felt happy in my appointment, and I told him this. I also said my post was so interesting that I had no desire to leave it, but at the same time it was not always a bed of roses. "No," replied his Majesty, "I know that."

The different standpoints from which the German mind and the British often regarded the same object were noticeable especially where matters of taste were involved. For example, the caricatures of Queen Victoria and King Edward while we were at peace with Germany were deplorably vulgar, whereas the British ones concerning the Emperor during the Great War ridiculed him but did not, so far as I know, introduce anything physically offensive. But tastes differ everywhere ; ladies have been known to attend a court of law when some wretch was being tried for his life.

My wife and I were driving in Berlin on August 26, 1902, when we noticed large posters on the kiosks which informed the public that life-size figures, representing the various stages of King Edward's operation—which had taken place a couple of months previously—were on view at a waxworks exhibition. It seemed to be my unpleasant duty to see the things for myself, so I went to the place, which was situated in a fashionable part of the city.

The atmosphere of the hall containing the effigies was of course very close, but a considerable number of persons, including children, were present ; they kept coming and going. The details shall not be inflicted on the reader, but I have never seen a more horrible, cold-blooded, sight. The posters in the streets announced that children and soldiers would be admitted at half-price ! Now the Germans are very fond of their children, yet no exception had been taken to this loathsome and degrading display. It occurred to me to reflect on the howl of fury which would have burst forth if the operations on the Emperor

Frederick, for instance, had been placarded and shown in London.

These waxworks were a permanent institution, it appeared, under the name of an anatomical museum, and contained many other repulsive sights. A worse display of taste where young people were concerned could not be conceived, but the authorities sanctioned it.

After my view I had an official complaint made, and the assurance was given that the police would order the removal of King Edward's effigies, but the actual result was this : the grey beard on the central figure was replaced by a brown one, and the names were removed both in the museum and from the posters in the streets, some other title being given to the display. The authorities, I learned, looked upon a show of this description as having a useful hardening effect on youth. It was indeed the custom to habituate children to suffering, and to render them callous at an early age ; adenoids, for instance, would be removed one at a time—the patient could not stand more than one extraction on each occasion—without any anæsthetic, local or other, being used.

It happened that I was commanded to dine at Potsdam on the evening of the day when I visited the anatomical museum, and in the course of conversation with the Emperor I said that a sudden attack of sickness had very nearly prevented me from coming. His Majesty expressed his regret and inquired what had been the cause of it.

"Well, sir," I replied, "I went to a waxworks exhibition this afternoon and the horrible sights were almost too much for me ; I did not feel that I wanted any dinner."

He said he was sorry to hear this, and asked what the objects were which had upset me, so I answered :

"There were five life-size figures, sir, representing the various stages of King Edward's operation, and children are admitted at half-price ; I never saw anything so disgusting."

His Majesty evidently shared my abhorrence, and quite approved of my intention to have an official complaint lodged ; in a private letter to London I said the whole thing had been so revolting that I could not bring myself

to write officially on the subject. The Germans were, as I have said before, rough towards each other, according to our ideas.

A Guards officer and his young and very attractive wife were friends of ours, and when we met him one morning Mrs. Waters said she was going to call in the afternoon. He asked her to postpone her visit until the following day, as his wife had undergone a slight operation in the morning; part of one of her toes had been amputated owing to an accident. We were, of course, very sorry, and one of us expressed the hope that the patient was not suffering from any after-effects of the anæsthetic. He was evidently much surprised and said: "But we never give chloroform for trifles like that." Nor did the Germans administer it in much more severe cases, for it was considered to be wrong to alleviate pain if this could be avoided. The lady in question was fragile apparently and had been brought up in luxury, but she also made light of the subject; her physical courage is typical of the German race.

The remarkable versatility of the Kaiser was of course a foundation for good stories about him. There are three definite articles in German, masculine, feminine, and neuter, and some words have different meanings according to the article employed. For example, the German neuter word *Thor* means "gate," whereas in the masculine form it stands for "fool."

Some foreigner, a new arrival in Berlin, wished to see the celebrated Brandenburger-Thor (gate) and inquired from a passer-by:

"*Wo ist der Brandenburger-Thor?*"

"*Dort oben im Schloss wohnt er,*" was the reply, which means that "he [the Kaiser] lives up there in the palace!" The traveller was in Unter den Linden Street, at one end of which is the great gate, while the palace is at the other.

There is the story of two Germans in a restaurant who were discussing something in a rather loud tone, and one of them said, "But the Kaiser must be a fool." Thereupon an officer jumped up and threatened to run the speaker through unless he should abjectly apologize, but

the other explained, "I was talking about the Kaiser of China!"

The officer retorted, "There is only one Kaiser, so you must have been speaking about the All-Highest" (part of his Majesty's official title)!

After I had been about a year at Berlin, the political situation in Europe seemed to me to bode ill for the future, and the longer I stayed in Germany the more anxious did I become.

Neither my wife nor I had gone to Berlin with any preconceived ideas inimical to Germany; we knew, of course, that the Boer War had aroused intensely strong feeling against England, but many Englishmen were also vehemently opposed to it. This hostile German sentiment was prevalent not only in the capital of the empire but in the provinces as well, whereof we had plenty of evidence at first-hand, and Mrs. Waters was once impelled to express her feelings in a letter to her home.

She had read a peculiarly coarse paragraph in a German paper for children. In sending it to England she wrote: "Wouldn't I like to see the Germans bite the dust! They do want a hiding badly; may I be alive to see it given. No one can say we began by being prejudiced against them, but I must own that my feelings are not cordial at present." Yet all this time many German families, suffering from Anglophobia, were most hospitably disposed towards us; the same thing happened when I paid my first visit to Germany after the war, and one among several instances may be mentioned; her disasters were truthfully set down to England, but a lady, Frau von Obernitz, whom I had only met casually a quarter of a century earlier, hearing that I wished to visit German Silesia, most hospitably invited me to stay in her house, although she had lost her husband owing to the tragedy.

I noted in March 1902 that "if the Germans, with the Kaiser at their head, go on like this, it may be that the sooner we have war with them the better." Baron von Eckhardstein told the ambassador in that month that he had informed the Emperor of the dangerous British

mood; he certainly had the best facilities for ascertaining it.

In connexion with this question of official hatred and personal friendship, the late Lady Edward Cavendish once told me that some members of Parliament were intensely shocked when those wonderful masters of the English language, Mr. Asquith and Mr. Arthur Balfour, having attacked each other in the most scathing but polished terms, walked out of the House of Commons arm-in-arm.



## CHAPTER XIV

THE outstanding political event of the moment, February 1902, was the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance. The ambassador heard the news in the first days of that month, and was instructed to inform the Emperor immediately. By that time all idea of a similar Anglo-German treaty had been definitely abandoned, and there was some speculation in the chancery as to the way in which his Majesty would receive the intelligence. In thanking Lascelles for telling him, he said he had learnt the news on the previous day from Count Metternich, his ambassador in London, who had been informed by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne.

The alliance caused a good deal of excitement, as it was an entirely new thing for a European country to join hands with an oriental nation, especially one which was known to be ambitious. Our potential enemies in those days were France and Russia, but the whirligig of political intrigues was soon to make us all the warmest friends. The treaty was concluded in order, so it was said, to maintain the integrity and political independence of China and Corea ; if either England or Japan should be at war with one other Power, meaning France or Russia, then the partner in the alliance was to remain neutral. Should a second Power, however, take part in the struggle then the ally should also step into the fray, and peace was to be concluded only by mutual agreement.

The early disclosure of the treaty to the Emperor and to his ambassador was a show of good-will on the part of the British Government, for the alliance was to be kept secret for the moment, a condition to which the Kaiser readily assented, but it was published to the world shortly afterwards. Perhaps the reason for maintaining secrecy

at first was because Parliament may not have been sitting.

Far from taking umbrage at our having found a new friend the Emperor expressed his satisfaction ; he may have wished in this manner to conceal his disappointment at the failure of his own earlier scheme ; you never can tell in diplomacy where plans are shifted from day to day. The Kaiser said he was glad that our "noodles" had at last had a "lucid interval." The noodles were, of course, the Cabinet Ministers, and his Majesty expressed—and perhaps he meant it—his surprise that the treaty had not been concluded sooner.

The ambassador, Lascelles, was inclined to think that the British Government had gone too far ; according to the agreement it appeared that we were to have a free hand in China, while Japan was to remain unfettered with regard to Corea. The interests of the Celestial Empire were apparently of minor importance, notwithstanding the talk about integrity and independence.

The Emperor by no means concerned himself solely with military and political affairs, much as they naturally occupied his time. He took great interest in civilian matters, and especially in the material prosperity of his subjects ; he was indeed instrumental in evolving several schemes for their benefit, and sometimes appointed Ministers whose views were or had been decidedly advanced.

I knew the Chief of his Civil Cabinet, Lucanus, who was credited with being a Socialist in disguise. This depends on what one understands by Socialism, but Lucanus introduced plans for social reform ; he was also an excellent landlord, with a contented tenantry, and the rents which he told me he received were unusually high for Germany.

Herr von Miquel was Minister of Finance for ten years until 1901, when he resigned, and died shortly afterwards. His ancestors had emigrated to Germany at the time of the great French Revolution. He was about twenty years of age when the disorders broke out in Germany in 1848, and sympathized whole-heartedly with the movement ; he revised some of his doctrines later, but was always progressive and aimed at social reforms on non-party

lines, and his outstanding achievement was the reform of the antiquated Prussian system of taxation. He had come to the front during the lifetime of the old Emperor William I, but was appointed to the Finance Ministry by the Kaiser. The Reichstag could vote or refuse money supplies, but all Ministers were appointed or dismissed by the Sovereign, who frankly said that it was he who directed Germany's policy. His nominations of progressive men for certain posts showed his anxiety for the material well-being of his subjects.

The old Emperor, William I, was not very bright intellectually and was also very obstinate. When heir-apparent to the Crown of Prussia he had been obliged, in 1848, to fly from Potsdam, and took refuge for a short time in England. He had indeed realized, before the troubles of that year actually occurred, that reforms were inevitable, but his idea was first to have the disorders repressed by the strong hand before removing their cause.

The reader shall now have another respite from high politics, and be asked to digest something of a lighter nature which relates to the travelling carriage in which Napoleon was within an ace of being captured—and shot—at the beginning of his flight from Waterloo.

Prince Blücher of Wahlstatt and his wife, born Princess Radziwill (of the Russian branch of that great family) were friends of ours. He was the great-grandson of the celebrated Field-Marshal, whose Waterloo saddle is now in the museum of the Royal United Service Institution in London. She is related to the Hohenzollern family, for an ancestress of hers married the brother of a King of Prussia in the eighteenth century, and a dull time the poor lady had of it.

The great Blücher's career in the Prussian Army had not always been one of uninterrupted advancement. After serving with distinction in Silesia under Frederick the Great he was superseded by an officer whose principal qualification was family influence, and Blücher therefore applied for permission to retire from the Army; but the King did not answer his application. His request had been couched in somewhat strong terms, and he wrote again still more

angrily—he had a short temper—to the monarch with the same result. He then sent in another application. This time the King wrote in the margin that Blücher could “go to the Devil!” He did not do that, but left the service. Some time afterwards he was asked to come back and agreed, provided that he should be reinstated in his original rank, and that the period of his retirement should count as full-pay service. There was a good deal of wrangling, and fortunately for Prussia matters were eventually arranged.

It may be mentioned, in connexion with this anecdote, that something similar happened to the great Moltke, who applied for permission to retire from the Danish Army, where the prospects of advancement seemed hopeless. The Minister of War wrote to his Sovereign recommending that the request be granted, as “the Danish Army will lose nothing thereby.” Then came the Schleswig-Holstein war of 1864, where Moltke was Chief of the Prussian General Staff.

Princess Wanda Blücher told us, towards the end of 1901, that her husband would like King Edward to accept, as a Coronation gift in 1902, in memory of the kindness shown to him in England, Napoleon's Waterloo carriage, and he wanted me to sound his Majesty on the subject. Blücher was a very remarkable man in many ways; he had served in the Prussian Army during the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and then he retired from the Army.

He owned great estates in Prussian and Austrian Silesia, and was a very wealthy man, with a rooted objection to paying taxes—like some other people. His theory was that persons of high rank ought not to be directly taxed at all, and that all revenue required should be raised almost entirely by indirect taxation. He told me one day: “But look at the extravagance of the poor; even their children wear boots and shoes, whereas in my young days they always went about barefooted or in clogs.”

“Times have changed since then,” was my reply, “and nowadays the people mean to have better conditions of living.”

“But it is not right that a man of my position should be taxed at all!”

The prince was probably the founder of those institutions which have recently attracted the inquiring eye of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Winston Churchill, namely one-man companies. Blücher turned himself into a bank, the West Bank. On the ground that a company never dies, unless bankruptcy, winding-up, or something similar, extinguishes it, all death duties would be escaped. Moreover taxation of himself was illegal, provided he did not reside for more than three consecutive months in each year in one of his houses. He was remarkably successful in his plan. He owned the delightful island of Herm in the Channel Islands, where there was no income-tax. He had to leave that spot during the Great War because it was thought he might shelter German submarines—which merely proved that the sleuth-hounds did not know his character. He also passed most of the London season in the metropolis and spent several thousands there annually. Not once could he be shown to be liable to taxation. The Austrian Government did indeed make a valiant effort to discover where he kept his funds, and applied once confidentially to one of the great joint-stock banks for information, of course unsuccessfully.

It appeared, however, that the vast expense caused by the frequent migrations of a great establishment cost the prince more than if he had paid his dues, but he held firmly to his view that princes should be tax-free. I believe that he left behind him, when he passed on to a presumably tax-free world, no fewer than fifty-nine lawsuits for his heirs to settle. Among his possessions was a palace in the Pariser Platz in Berlin; it was let off in apartments to some of the magnates and business firms, because the owner was one of the Kaiser's bitterest opponents, and could not be induced to reside in the capital, or meet him. When the Crown Prince of Prussia came of age there was talk of purchasing some suitable residence for him, and Blücher was sounded about selling his building. He replied, he told me, that he would willingly part with it—for an immense sum—but there was a difficulty: it was settled property, and the money derived from the sale must be invested in government securities. This would be

a very simple matter, he was informed ; Prussian Consols were the finest security in the world.

"Mark my words," replied Blücher, "with William II as King, they will soon become utterly valueless !"

He told me he had never intended to sell the property, but saw a good opportunity for a thrust at his Majesty when the subject was broached.

The prince was very fond of England, and the present Count Blücher, one of his sons by a former marriage, was born at Herm in order that he might be a British subject. After the prince left the island he stayed for a time in England and then returned to Germany via Holland. On reaching the German frontier he was treated with every respect, and a German officer had been sent to meet his Highness. It was thought that he could give useful information, but when he was questioned he said that he had none to impart, and that if he had he should refuse, as he had passed such happy days in England, where he had been most hospitably treated.

The prince and his wife reached the German frontier soon after a Zeppelin raid which had caused much damage in London ; it was hoped that she would be more communicative than his Highness, and a very engaging young officer questioned her on the subject. It had been thought that these attacks would break down the courage of the people, and the princess admitted that the raid had had one great result. Her examiner's spirits rose as he foresaw irresistible pressure being brought to bear on the British Government to conclude peace, so he inquired what the consequence had been.

"Oh," she replied, "it filled the recruiting offices to overflowing !"

Prince Blücher, like his great ancestor, was remarkably robust, although of somewhat slight physique ; he was a wonderful shot and could kill a high pheasant on the wing with a rifle ; his chamois shooting was said to be the finest in Europe. He was eighty years old when he died in 1916 owing to his horse falling on him on his estate in Prussia, which a grateful country had conferred on the hero of 1815. Both the prince and the princess, on their return to Ger-

many, were regarded as being very pro-English ; he was a patriotic German, but would never have descended to take advantage of his position at Herm, and it is only right to say this about two faithful friends of England. Some people who might have known better suffered from an attack of nerves.

My wife and I paid a long-promised visit to the Blüchers at Radun in Austrian Silesia in February. Its associations were most interesting. The old Knight Templar castle had been destroyed about the commencement of the nineteenth century to make room for the modern house, and the former was such a solid structure that it had to be blown up. What vandalism ! The castle had played an important part in the Thirty Years War and was occupied at one time by five hundred Brandenburgers, part of Mansfeld's bodyguard. They found there a great supply of liquor, and instead of keeping watch they all became helplessly drunk. A Spanish colonel from a castle in one of the other hills, made a forced march, reached Radun at three in the morning, and slaughtered every man.

The Spaniard then rode back with his force to his own aery, but retribution was to overtake him. Mansfeld happened to be at Troppau, a few miles from Radun, with 20,000 troops. He was, of course, furious, and set out in pursuit. After a siege, matters became desperate and the Spaniard sallied forth with his few remaining survivors and cut his way through to another castle. They were again besieged, and every man preferred death to surrender. Until this day—at any rate until 1914—twelve choristers, dressed as Spaniards, chanted a Mass for these Spaniards once a year in a tiny chapel close to the castle. The cost of this Mass used to be defrayed by the Queen of Spain, and the reason why only the Spanish souls were cared for, while those of the Brandenburgers were neglected, was that the latter had been drunk and died unshriven, whereas this rite is not necessary for those who are killed in battle.

Our suite of apartments was on the ground-floor and stood on part of the terrace of the old fortress. My wife's

bedroom was of vast dimensions, while mine was also of ample size though smaller ; between the two was a large sitting-room. A few days after our arrival a telegram summoned me to London as the King wished to see me about the famous carriage. I had informed his Majesty at Sandringham that Prince Blücher wished to present it to him as a Coronation gift, and the question was whether the Emperor should be so seriously upset about the proposal as to render its acceptance inadvisable.

During the night preceding my departure from Radun something caused me to awake. The windows in both our bedrooms were heavily shuttered and draped with curtains, and there had been no light in my room when I had fallen asleep. But I saw a rosy glow which practically filled the room and gradually disappeared. Being obliged to make a very early start I left my wife's slumbers undisturbed, for she was recovering from a very severe attack of influenza. Several weeks afterwards I overheard her recounting exactly my experience, and only then discovered that her vision had been precisely the same as mine and on the same night. When she related it to her hosts on the following day one of them replied at once : " Oh, you saw the Brandenburgers ; they walk on the terrace where your rooms are built."

The prince had a number of Napoleonic relics at Radun besides the famous carriage, among them being many portraits depicting the great Emperor and his family. One, by David, represented the conqueror crossing the Alps ; a second was a likeness of the King of Rome, and a third was a picture of Queen Hortense, the mother of Napoleon III, while others were portraits of the Emperor's relations.

These historic works of art have a very interesting history. They had all been kept in the palace at St. Cloud. When the Emperor lay prostrate, an old and faithful retainer was afraid lest the revengeful Bourbons should have them burnt, so he cut them out of their frames and hid them in some of the chimneys, perhaps in the hope that his adored master should again arise triumphant and confound all his foes. In view of the slavery to



which Napoleon had subjected their country, it was only natural that the Prussians should ransack every likely hiding-place. The portraits were soon discovered and presented to the King of Prussia, Frederick William III.

No monarch of modern times had suffered as he had suffered at the hands of his assailant ; his country had been hacked in pieces, and Napoleon's cruel treatment of his wife, Queen Louise, who is still a martyr in German eyes, had broken her heart and sent her to an early grave ; the Duke of Brunswick, mortally wounded at Jena, had died at Altona, but the victor refused him burial in his ancestral vault ; that man of iron, Blücher, was forced to surrender at Lübeck ; Prussia had literally been bled white by the conqueror. Frederick William could not bear the idea of having anything to remind him of the tyrant ; he would "share nothing in common with the Corsican brigand," and so he gave the portraits to Field-Marshal Blücher. They were in excellent condition when we saw them.

They remained at Radun until recently, when their present owner, Count Lothair Blücher, removed them to his residence in Guernsey. Radun being in Austrian Silesia, became part of Czechoslovakia when Europe was carved afresh in 1919 on the lines of self-determination, and as Count Blücher is a British subject he naturally wishes to have such historic relics in the land where he is domiciled.

The reasoning of some people has led them to believe that Frederick the Great, when he was fighting for the very existence of his tiny country, was really planning the Great War whence Germans were to emerge as rulers of the earth. Similarly it may be imagined by some that Count Lothair Blücher was born in Herm, in the Channel Islands, so that he also should one day strike a fatal blow at the British Empire. His natal day nearly coincided with the cession of Heligoland to Germany at a time when Anglo-German relations were unusually good, and the truth is—it is very simple—that his father had such an affection and admiration for England that he determined his child should be born a British subject ;

indeed, the prince seriously thought at one time of becoming one himself. Count Blücher was educated in this country, and was and is English. When the storm burst in 1914 he applied at once to join the Army, but was informed that his name was an insuperable barrier. "Well, then," he replied, "I had better change it to Wellington!"

When Bismarck, in the year 1865, was preparing the stroke which was to pluck the Hapsburg Empire off its pinnacle as the dominant Power in Central Europe, he wanted some bait which would keep France and Napoleon III quiet when the time should be ripe for the execution of his project. The idea occurred to him to return these family pictures to the Emperor of the French, and he informed my friend's father of his desire. The latter naturally did not at all approve of the plan and refused compliance. Bismarck was not, as we know, a man to be easily rebuffed, and the Prussian Government brought an action against Prince Blücher on the ground that he was merely the trustee for these national heirlooms. The matter was rushed through, and Bismarck won his case in the courts. The father thereupon handed over the portraits, which were then in Prussia, to his son, who removed them to Radun, getting them into Austrian territory by the last train which crossed the frontier before they could be seized by the Iron Chancellor's emissaries. Bismarck was furious and never forgave the princes. We know that France remained neutral during the brief Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866. It was not known until later that she had no choice in the matter, because nearly all her supplies of ammunition had been dispatched to Mexico during the brief and troubled reign of the Emperor Maximilian. It may be that Bismarck proposed to recover the paintings from France in due course. William II and my friend had a good deal in common in their characters, and this would account for the antipathy which each felt for the other.

Napoleon's carriage was in exactly the same condition as at the time of its capture. The Field-Marshal had given orders that if the Emperor should be taken prisoner he was to be shot out of hand. The carriage stood very

high off the ground and was slung on stout straps ; the front part could be let down so that Napoleon could lie flat to sleep. It was in fact a very large landau picked out in red and gold, but, of course, the rough roads had considerably damaged the paint, although a good deal of the gilding still remained.

When the Emperor began his flight in the carriage it came to the bridge at Genappes, which was too narrow to enable it to cross. Blücher's hussars were close at hand, and his Majesty got out hurriedly, mounted a horse, and escaped at the very last moment. The lining was cut to pieces in the search for state papers and valuables. Among other things found were some diamonds which eventually formed part of the Crown jewels of Prussia.

The weather was warm on June 18, 1815, and Napoleon wore his loose, and light, grey overcoat during the battle instead of the tunic. When he quitted the carriage he left behind him his tunic (the dark green and red uniform of the *Chasseurs à Cheval*), hat, and sword. I tried on the tunic, which fitted me more or less in the arms and back, but would have taken two of me in the chest ; the neck was so enormous that the front part of the coat went straight out from it. We had a fancy dress dinner one night, when I wore the tunic while Mrs. Waters was garbed in some other priceless relics, one of which was a mass of most beautiful lace, which had been presented to the hero of 1815 by the city of Brussels after the downfall of Napoleon. We also saw a number of letters from prominent Englishmen, among them Mr. Wilberforce, congratulating the Field-Marshal on his achievements in that memorable year.

My friend told us a curious story about the annexation of part of Austrian Silesia by Frederick the Great. It was that a lawsuit had been going on for a century and a half between Prussia and Austria concerning a small tract of disputed territory, and the latter Power had always managed to delay judgment. When the King succeeded to the throne he sent an ultimatum which led to war. He defeated Austria, which then agreed to relinquish her claim, but Frederick replied that he wanted

compound interest for the hundred and fifty years, and took it in the form of the additional territory which he annexed.

Prince Blücher confirmed the information gathered by me in Berlin to the effect that a number of Germans—he said about three hundred—had been trained with the artillery of the Guard at Potsdam before joining the Boers. The German Emperor could scarcely, therefore, have objected to our relatively small purchases of munitions of war in his country.

The first German Emperor, William I, had been very friendly with my host, and told him that Bismarck at the time of the Franco-German War suggested to the British Government that it should take Algeria, but the proposal was declined.

On my arriving in London from Radun, King Edward honoured me by an invitation to luncheon, when the carriage problem was discussed. His Majesty was very desirous of being able to accept the proposed gift, but felt it should be made quite clear that the German Emperor had no strong objection ; the King hated hurting anybody's feelings. There was plenty of time, and I was sure to see the Kaiser before long, when we could talk the matter over.

Officers of continental armies were very fond of getting decorations, home and foreign ; in Germany these distinctions, except when they were awarded for active service, were known as "Luncheon-Orders" (*Frühstücks-Orden*), and they were distributed in accordance with a regular system. One of the German princes had asked me to interest King Edward on behalf of a friend, who was very anxious to be promoted in the Royal Victorian Order ; he had already received its junior class. My answer to the prince had been that he had better ask his Majesty direct, but he said he did not dare to do so. During luncheon at Marlborough House some question arose about a decoration, and I told the King about the commission with which I had been charged ; he inquired whether there was any special reason for the honour, and I replied there was none. My advice, I said, had been that the

prince should put forward his own request, but he was afraid to do so.

"He had better not ; I will give him a good snub if he does !" was his Majesty's comment.

On my return to Berlin I said that the King did not see his way to granting the request, which he had not approved of at all. The prince was relieved to think that the snub had come to me and not to him.

Every country has its own system of etiquette. The Emperor and Empress were dining once at the Embassy, when her Chamberlain, Herr von dem Kneesebeck, who was nothing if not a courtier of the most extreme type, arrived about half an hour after the company were all seated. It appeared that he had forgotten the hour, but he walked in as if nothing had happened ; perhaps he had expected his Excellency to wait for him ; neither of the imperial guests appeared to be offended at his breach of good manners. If he had arrived late at Vice-Regal Lodge in Simla he would have found the door closed against him.

Another dinner incident may be quoted. The late Prince Christian was dining at the embassy ; he was very fond of lobsters, which were always provided for his Royal Highness when they were in season. He happened also to be bald. On one occasion he was just remarking how much he appreciated the ambassador's thoughtfulness when a clumsy footman dropped an immense spoon on to the crown of his head from a fair height. It clattered on to his silver plate, and the prince was naturally rather startled. We all looked, of course, as if nothing had happened ; but his son, Prince Albert, who was in the Prussian Hussars of the Guard, not only had the impertinence to laugh out loud, but said : "Ah, that was a good one, papa ; he got you that time !" H.R.H. got crimson, but restrained himself.

At a time when Germany was most malignant concerning England—in March 1902—a remarkable honour was accorded to a British subject in the person of Miss (now Dame) Ethel Smyth. This lady was a most accomplished musician, and had composed the well-known opera, *Der*

*Wald.* In order to have any prospect of success in this country, it was necessary that a work of this description should have been first produced on the Continent, and Miss Smyth was bold enough to wish to enter the lion's den at Berlin. The ambassador was good enough to use his influence, with the result that the Emperor ordered the opera to be produced at the Royal Opera House.

The representations were under the control of a high Court official, in this instance Count Hochberg, whose feelings probably became more anti-English than ever when he received the imperial command. Rehearsals were, of course, indispensable, and an opera company of hostile artistes was not likely to be easily managed, so that Miss Smyth needed all the firmness of her character to get things done to some extent in the way she wished. It was said that poor Count Hochberg's health gave way in consequence of his many trials. The first night was on March 20, and the opera did not receive the applause which was its undoubted due; the artistes—as far as one could judge—did all they dared to wreck it, and would have gone much further had it not been for the fact that the Kaiser had ordered them to perform the work. His Majesty had done a very kind action, which arrested the attention of the musical world everywhere.

Meanwhile I had been waiting for an opportunity to discuss the question of Napoleon's carriage with the Emperor, for it was wiser not to ask for an audience about the matter. The chance presented itself one day when his Majesty wished to see me about sending delegations to the forthcoming Coronation from the King's two Prussian regiments; he said they should be very small in number, as he was aware that the pressure on the available accommodation must be very great.

One of these regiments was the Blücher Hussars, so I said that at a recent visit to the Field-Marshal's great-grandson I had seen the identical vehicle and had worn the tunic. The Kaiser was much interested, and asked a number of questions. My opening came at last, and I remarked that as Prince Blücher owned one of the Channel Islands, and spent part of every season in London, I rather

thought that he intended asking King Edward to accept the carriage as a Coronation gift.

The Emperor's mood changed like a flash ; he began by inquiring where the carriage was, which I told him, and then he wanted to know how it had come into the prince's possession. When this was explained to him, he said his view was that the relic must have been left in trust with the Blücher family for Prussia, and that the proper place for the carriage was in the Arsenal at Berlin. He spoke in the strongest terms about the prince—as we know, there was no love lost between them—and declared that “ he ought to be shot ” for even thinking of such an indecent idea. He finished by saying that he would write to the King on the subject, and ask him on no account to accept the carriage if it should be offered to him. He did not, however, do this, but instead told the Chief of his Military Cabinet shortly afterwards to write to me that the Emperor advised our Sovereign to refuse the offer if it should be made. This settled the matter, and while the carriage did not go to London, neither was it sent to Berlin.

The Prince of Wales paid a visit to the King of Denmark in the spring, and his cuirassier regiment, which was stationed at Cologne, heard that his Royal Highness would pass through that city on his homeward journey. The commanding officer expressed the hope that he might pay his respects and present his officers to their Chief ; they probably detested the British as much as any others among their compatriots, but they nevertheless ardently desired to have the honour of an interview.

I happened to know the time-table of the Prince's journey, and that he would reach Cologne, after travelling all night, at an early hour in the morning, so it was unlikely that he should wish to be disturbed, and to rise betimes in order to speak a few more or less formal words. I therefore explained to the commanding officer that it would be better to wait for a more favourable opportunity, but he was insistent.

I felt almost as I imagine the Spanish colonel must have felt when he was beleaguered by Mansfeld's men near

Radun, and only two alternatives remained. One of them was put aside at once as impossible, namely, that I should take upon myself to say that the Prince would prefer slumber to receiving the officers, but before seeking refuge in my last ditch it occurred to me to consult one or two members of the chancery, as their diplomatic skill might find an easy way out of the difficulty. Even they, however, did not see how it could be arranged—without giving offence—that his Royal Highness should be left in peace, for the cuirassiers had set their hearts on having an audience of their Chief.

My sole remaining alternative was really rather Machiavellian in its nature. Impressing on the colonel how sure I was that the Prince of Wales would regret not meeting his new officers, I said this would be physically impossible, for he would not be in Germany or anywhere else on the Continent, as he was travelling incognito, and did not, therefore, exist as Prince of Wales, and colonel-in-chief of cuirassiers. This settled the matter, and I was quite pleased with my solution of the problem; but I heard afterwards that the cuirassiers said I must be an uncommonly stupid fool for having mismanaged the affair. One cannot please everybody.

The Emperor and Empress dined with Sir Frank Lascelles on April 4, forty-three people sitting down. At this particular dinner-party the Kaiser was for once shown to have made a mistake in his reading of the Admiralty Dress Regulations. I have always understood that these are most complicated for anybody who is not a British naval officer, and include a great number of possible combinations. His Majesty, who was wearing the "Ball Dress" uniform of a British Admiral of the Fleet, told Captain Ewart, the naval attaché, that he was wrongly garbed; a post-captain was not likely to err in this or in any other respect, and Ewart replied: "No, your Majesty, I can only appear before a Crowned Head in 'full dress' unless specially ordered otherwise, which was not the case."

We went again to Weimar about the end of April to fish, and were fortunate enough to come in for some



Shakespeare celebrations. It was the headquarters of an important body known as the Shakespeare Society. The members were all elderly gentlemen who called themselves "uncles" in consequence of their common bond. In addition to one of the plays being acted during the conference, the members held a great many meetings where they discussed, with characteristic German thoroughness, points connected with the poet and his works.

They were all presumably Baconians, a sect which is, I believe, more widespread in Germany than the section which holds that the bard's real name is Shakespeare. A voluminous biographical dictionary came into my hands at Weimar which had a very elaborate article on the poet and his plays. Its heading was: "Bacon, styled Shakespeare." Much interesting literature on the subject has since appeared; what I have read of it leaves me none the wiser, but it seems incredible that if Bacon were the author he should not have arranged to place the fact beyond doubt after his death. Of the foreign translations with which I am acquainted some of the German ones are by far the best, but not one of them can, I think, compare with the original English where the great speeches are concerned. The play acted at Weimar during this visit was the *Merchant of Venice*, and Shylock was absolutely superb, but Portia and Nerissa!!! German actors are often excellent in these plays, and the German language makes up for much that is deficient in a translation.

We went to London in May as the King wished to see me about some matters connected with his forthcoming Coronation, so they had better be related in another chapter.

## CHAPTER XV

THE first Court of King Edward's reign was held in May, just after our arrival in London, and we were commanded to attend it. The function took place in the evening, and this was a very pleasant innovation for the ladies, compared with the Drawing-rooms of Queen Victoria's time ; they did not always feel that they were doing themselves justice when attired in Court costume on a bitter afternoon in spring. On this occasion gentlemen were also invited to attend, and the sight was a very pretty one.

The King received me on the day after the Court. The Kaiser had already notified his intention of being represented at the Coronation by his brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, who was a sailor, and our Sovereign expressed his annoyance to me that the example of other Great Powers had not been followed by sending the heir to the throne, the Crown Prince.

King Edward wished to discuss the matter of the military delegations which were to come from three of the six foreign regiments of which he was Colonel-in-Chief. He quite approved of the German Emperor's intention to send small numbers, and then he asked if I could suggest the names of officers to be in charge of the delegations from the Danish Guard Hussars, the Kiev Dragoons of Russia, and the 3rd Portuguese Cavalry Regiment. It is always pleasant to be able to do a good turn to friends, so I proposed the late Colonel (afterwards General Sir James) Grierson, R.A., for the Russians, the late Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Major-General) Barnardiston, 77th Regiment, for the Danes, and Major J. H. V. Crowe, R.A., for Portugal. I had started life as an artilleryman.

His Majesty approved of the first-named at once, but was rather doubtful about the two others on the ground

that their army rank was not quite high enough, but he talked the matter over; after patiently listening to my encomiums on all three officers, it came out that he knew and liked Barnardiston's father, and was satisfied that the son had every qualification for the post; so he was all right. His Majesty also allowed himself to agree to Crowe's nomination, and it was a very suitable one. Matters of this nature belonged really to the Patronage Department of the War Office. Everything went according to plan, and my friends saw all that there was to be seen during the Coronation period.

The King, of course, had a great many things to settle of infinitely greater importance, but he was a very quick worker. Accidents, however, do happen, often at very inconvenient moments. We were in his Majesty's study and the party was completed by his terrier. I suppose the latter felt that he was being rather ignored and presently, after prowling round our chairs, jumped on to the King's writing-table. As ill-luck would have it, he upset the inkpot not only over the list which his Majesty had just drawn up, so that a fresh one had to be made, but over the royal hand as well. All true dog-lovers find it hard to scold them for accidents and the King merely said: "Oh, that was very naughty."

The little dog, quite unabashed, wagged his tail, smiled at his master, and kissed his hand, before regaining the floor; it was, I think, the same dog which followed the King to his grave.

The enormous advantage of having an appointment like those just mentioned at such a time as a Coronation—it was the same during the Diamond Jubilee festivities in 1897—lay in the fact that one had very special privileges. London was, of course, filled to overflowing, and vast crowds of people came up from the country from day to day, so that traffic in the streets was still further congested. The police arrangements were as admirable as they possibly could be, but the metropolis was simply crammed. In other words, the ordinary individual had not the faintest idea how long it might take him even to cross a thoroughfare.

We lucky ones in charge of Foreign Missions were supplied with a special Police Pass which authorized us to drive—not necessarily in a carriage with the royal arms thereon—on the wrong side of the street, or to proceed across, say, Piccadilly Circus when every other wheeled vehicle had been held up for perhaps half an hour or longer. We were always supposed to be in a hurry on urgent public business, and it is not surprising that less fortunate mortals were bitterly incensed against us as we passed them smiling. Of course the saving of time was very great.

The courtesy extended to foreign guests in this respect was what one should expect, but it certainly was very unfortunate that some of our own magnates should not have been similarly favoured; Mr. Chamberlain, for instance, was Secretary of State for the Colonies—as they were then termed—in 1902, and his wonderful personality and magnetism had arrested and continued to hold the respect and often the admiration—or hatred—of the whole world, but he did not even appear to think it odd that similar facilities should not be accorded to him. The late Duchess of Buccleuch was actually Mistress of the Robes in 1897 and asked to be supplied with a special pass; her position as the principal lady about Queen Victoria's person required this. Some badly informed official at Scotland Yard replied that the Commissioner of Police regretted he was unable to comply with the request of "Mrs. Buccleuch!" He was promptly undeceived concerning her Grace's position. Of all those imposing turn-outs, now almost if not altogether relics of the past, namely State Coaches, which my eyes have seen, hers was the finest—absolute perfection in fact.

I took two very pretty children in 1897 to see the Queen leave Buckingham Palace on her return to Windsor after the Jubilee festivities were over, and my duties required me to go somewhere else immediately afterwards. This necessitated my crossing Hyde Park Corner and going along Park Lane, so I was given a carriage from the royal mews. There was still an extremely dense crowd

at Hyde Park Corner ; it had converged from all points of the compass, and in spite of the line of troops (who had not yet been withdrawn) and police, the pressure of those behind had, after her Majesty had passed, caused the front lines to surge forward against their will. A portion of the route was blocked and the coachman, who was in scarlet livery, was obliged to drive on to the refuge. The crowd managed in some inexplicable manner to make way—and no assemblage can be kinder and more courteous than one in a great English city—so that we traversed the refuge in most stately manner at a foot's-pace. My future little sister-in-law, Miss Oakley, was mistaken by some of the bystanders for a princess, and several hats were raised, which the young imp appreciated immensely to my confusion, for I was nothing if not strictly official on such occasions.

We returned to Berlin towards the end of May. The ambassador received a telegram from the King on June 1, directing him to inform the Emperor immediately that the Boers had accepted our terms, which had been signed by Lord Milner, Lord Kitchener, and the enemy delegates. The Emperor was no doubt genuinely glad that the long struggle had ceased at last, for the peace rendered his own position in Germany much more comfortable ; but the impression of some diplomatists that hatred of England in that land was practically confined to the Press was rudely shattered.

The Chancellor, Bülow, did not follow the usual course of leaving a congratulatory card on the ambassador as he should have done when he learnt the news, and this omission on his part was much commented on at the British Embassy ; Bülow, I think, also told other foreign representatives at Berlin what he had failed to do, and the affront, for it was an affront, was the more marked in a country like Germany, where people were so very punctilious about forms. After all that Lascelles had done in order to try to make things go smoothly, his Excellency was very naturally much hurt ; nor did Richthofen, the Foreign Minister, observe the amenities, but he cannot be criticized for this, because he could not have done

what he would have liked to do, and so act in opposition to his chief, that "impudent rascal, Bülow," as I wrote about him at the time.

Before the terms of peace had been definitely accepted by the enemy, the Emperor again felt impelled to meddle in matters which did not concern his Majesty, and he did this in a manner calculated to arouse the suspicion that he wished to do a little window-dressing to please his own countrymen. Instead of telegraphing to our Sovereign in cipher, which he knew he should have done, he had dispatched a telegram in plain language—which might, therefore, just as well have been published in the German Press—to King Edward stating that he was aware of our conditions; the Boers, he said, would be great fools not to accept them, especially as there was to be an amnesty for rebels.

The Emperor's idea was to give the British Government a lead in this direction; perhaps the other side may have asked him to do this; if the amnesty had materialized, then the Kaiser could have let it be known that he had effectively intervened, and the Germans would naturally have been delighted in consequence. He had not been informed, however, of the actual terms—nor did we at the Embassy know them—until the treaty was signed, and it did not mention the word "amnesty." Germany was unhappy about the final result, for although her dream of some day exercising a protectorate over the Transvaal and Orange Free State had vanished, she had cherished the hope that the peace terms would have been more lenient than was actually the case.

Nobody can state positively what was in the mind of William II when he dispatched his open message to King Edward; one can only form a judgment which may be right or wrong. My opinion, for what it is worth, is that he accepted the settlement unreservedly when it was signed and delivered, cut his loss as one may say, but that before this happened he thought something might turn up which should place a powerful card in his hand. I am sure he had an enormous admiration for this country, but more for her traditions and exploits than for Britain

as he saw her, while the expansion of Germany, his own Fatherland, was ever uppermost in his thoughts.

He misjudged us when he told me that my country had become degenerate through excessive luxury in some quarters, but he did not dispute my contradiction that he had had no opportunity of acquainting himself with the character of the British people. He did not refute my statement, but he did not altogether credit it. The great mass of our citizens were, he knew, accustomed to conditions much better than those under which the corresponding body of his own countrymen existed, and I think he believed that they were imitating that tiny but criminal section of society, the idle rich. If England was on the downward path who was the natural heir? Germany.

Something should be said about the softer side of the Kaiser's nature. Residences in Berlin seldom had gardens belonging to them; there was none at the British Embassy in the Wilhelm Strasse, but the official palaces and buildings in that thoroughfare had them. Baron von Richthofen had been so kind as to give the freedom of his garden at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to our young son; this was a great treat for him, as it was close at hand and was splendidly equipped with all kinds of games for children.

His English nurse was quite a young girl of attractive appearance, and reported one day that a German officer had entered the garden in company with the baron. Our little boy was then aged three, and it was his custom to draw himself up and salute any officer very smartly. The officer was evidently delighted, asked von Richthofen who he was, and then had a long talk with the youngster. When they parted, thinking naturally enough that my boy must have recognized Majesty, he told him to give me his love. My wife wondered who the officer was, and inquiry showed that he must have been the Kaiser. Poor Helen Rogers, now a happy mother, was horrified when she learnt the truth; it had never occurred to her as possible that the Emperor should be walking unattended in somebody else's garden, and have been so simple and pleasant; she had not seen the Kaiser before, close enough to recognize

him, and did not curtsy on this occasion ; indeed she was a little stiff in her manner if unknown males entered into conversation with her charge, but this time of course she knew it was all right as she was acquainted with the Minister. The Emperor questioned her about Pat, and evidently had not resented the omission to curtsy. His Majesty took a great fancy to the child ; we happened to see him shortly after their first meeting, when he began at once to praise the " little boy blue," the size of his brain, his smartness in saluting, and his splendid head of hair. Like Lord Roberts, he never failed to inquire about him if they did not see each other for some time.

We returned to England in the middle of June—Berlin was a very convenient station, being less than twenty-four hours from London—on account of the forthcoming Coronation, and were invited by the late Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein to tea, where we met some other members of the Royal Family ; the circumstance is mentioned only because it was the occasion of a very strong anti-German verbal demonstration ! The Germans were heartily abused, and one of the royal guests was—I see it noted—in " splendid form." Worms or not, we had all turned.

Princess Christian told my wife that when a number of soldiers' families had been sent to England from Africa at the beginning of the Boer War, a great London daily paper had declared they had been very badly treated on the voyage. This came to the ears of Queen Victoria, who was greatly distressed in consequence, and caused special inquiries to be made, which considered the charge to have been devoid of foundation, and her Majesty then sent somebody to expostulate with the editor, who refused to contradict the report ; no doubt he thought his own sources of information the best ones.

The story probably arose from the fact that the accommodation in the steamer was very cramped, and the weather around the Equator is decidedly hot. In my younger days the space allotted to soldiers' families in the old Indian troopships, which were manned by the Royal Navy, was disgusting in every respect.



Prince Christian visited Berlin on several occasions during my time there. An older generation than the present one will remember the measures taken by Mr. (afterwards Lord) Long to stamp out rabies in this country ; they succeeded perfectly, thanks to his fixed resolve to turn a deaf ear to appeals from friend and foe alike. His Royal Highness brought his wife's pet dog to Berlin on a visit, and a more unpopular little animal did not exist ; he was thoroughly spoilt, and a great nuisance.

Even to dog-lovers like myself he was offensive, but my opportunity came one day. Just as I was approaching the corner of the street the dog appeared, and alone. This was very unusual, and I seized my chance as he flew at me ; in the very act his royal master turned the corner ! But he was the fraction of a second too late, and only heard an angry squeal. There were some other passers-by with another dog, and the prince ascribed the squeal to it, nor did the military adviser to the ambassador undecieve him.

When the time came for his Royal Highness to return to England he asked me about taking the dog with him, so I said the only way would be to write to Mr. Long, which he directed me to do. I explained that this would only produce a reply from the Minister's secretary to the effect that no exception could be made. The prince was unhappy about this, because he said his wife would be dreadfully disappointed, but I told him that if he should write to Mr. Long the latter might in the circumstances waive the rule, so I combed out a letter imploring help which H.R.H. copied and dispatched. The reply came promptly. It said that the regulation was inflexible ; if her Majesty should ask for it to be set aside in her favour Mr. Long would refuse ; on the other hand, if the Queen should *order* him to break the rule it would be a different matter altogether. Prince Christian did not see his way to appeal to her Majesty, so there it was. Lady Doreen Long was walking in the Park once and she was followed by a stray, unmuzzled dog. A constable asked for her name and address, and when she gave it he replied, " Oh, they all say that ! "

The Prussian military delegation arrived on June 22,

a day too early, but fortunately the quarters prepared for them were available ; otherwise it would have been very awkward. The cause of this was the meddling of Prince Henry of Prussia. The non-commissioned officers and men were put up in barracks as at the time of Queen Victoria's funeral, and a sergeant of the Guards, Sergeant Mitton, looked after them on both occasions ; he was a German scholar.

The King and Queen returned to Buckingham Palace from Windsor on June 28 for the Coronation, which was fixed for June 26 ; but a sad and dramatic surprise was in store for the nation. Everybody was informed in the forenoon of June 24 that the great event was postponed indefinitely owing to his Majesty's very dangerous illness, and an operation took place at a quarter past two o'clock in the afternoon. I had heard that the King had been suffering recently at Windsor, but had had no idea that very grave symptoms would develop. His Majesty had determined to proceed with the long and exhausting ceremony in Westminster Abbey, because he was resolved to subordinate all personal pain to his wish not to disappoint the crowds of faithful subjects. He had known that an operation must take place, but had refused point-blank to submit to it until after the Coronation. It was only when his physician, the late Sir Francis Laking, when unable to induce him to alter his decision, had told the King—so a member of the Household informed me—that, if the Coronation should take place as originally planned, he would be branded by the nation as a regicide, that his Majesty reluctantly reconsidered his decision.

On June 22, the day before the King and Queen returned to London, his Majesty had felt so much better that he showed some of his guests round Windsor Castle. When Sir Francis Laking saw him on the morrow, a Monday, he immediately perceived that his Majesty was not looking so well as before, and inquired what he had been doing on the previous day ; the great physician said at once there would be no Coronation during that week. In all probability it had been, I was told, a blessing in disguise that the King had overtired himself on June 22. He

might otherwise have gone through all the tedious business of receiving numberless guests, and other work connected with the approaching ceremony, and then, worn out by the great ceremonial in the Abbey, he might actually never have left the building alive.

The postponement caused general amazement and genuine grief; the public had had no inkling of the facts which prevented his Majesty from being present at dinner at Windsor during Ascot week, although the *Court Circular*, I believe, said he was; nor did he attend the race meeting. There was to have been a great State Procession through London on the day after the Coronation, and this very nearly took place, the Crown Equerry told me, in the King's absence, when it would have terminated with a Service of Intercession at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Happily his Majesty made rapid progress towards recovery, but there was no longer any life in anybody or anything; the public sorrow really was universal; the King's own suffering and disappointment had not, however, weakened his constant thoughtfulness for others. King George, then the Prince of Wales, sent for me after he had seen his Majesty on the morrow of the operation, and told me his father wished him to receive the foreign military deputations, whose members were given decorations or presents.

Prince Henry of Prussia was present at this ceremony. The King's practice had been that his officer in charge of each of these Missions should present its personnel, but Prince Henry looked as if he meant to make a rule for himself. I asked him therefore whether he wished to present the officers, and he replied: "That is what I am here for."

Somehow or other the idea had arisen, although not in my brain, that the German officers were to be more highly honoured than others of similar rank, but this hope was doomed to disappointment. Perhaps the remembrance of the unique distinction accorded to them at the time of Queen Victoria's funeral—by putting them in very high place—gave rise to the idea. The claims—if anybody had any *claim*—of the Danish and Russian officers were at

least as great as those of any other "Home Court" delegation. Privy Purse, the late General Sir Dighton Probyn, told me to assist him in selecting presents for the Kaiser's officers for whom a disappointment was in store.

Curses sometimes come home to roost. My readers will remember the terrific row caused directly by the Chancellor in January, six months earlier. This time the boot was to be on the other leg, and the adored Queen Alexandra placed it there! The King of course could see no visitors, who had been received by the Prince of Wales, but her Majesty signified her intention of inviting the Danish and Russian military deputations to visit her. They belonged to a "Home Court," and so did the German one; they were all very closely related to each other. When the Queen was asked whether she desired to receive the Kaiser's officers, she replied that nothing would induce her to do so, and she didn't.

They were of course dreadfully hurt and disappointed, for the snub was a very striking one; everybody knew of it. The matter was spoken about to me, but I told the Emperor's officers that the slight was scarcely to be wondered at after the indecent behaviour of Bülow, the German Press, and many others, who should have had some sense of the proprieties. Her Majesty had spoken to me about Prussian "arrogance."

There was a certain amount of friction connected with Prince Henry's visit, which shows how some people are so constituted by nature that they are always on the look-out to take offence where none is meant. Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee came in the Prince's suite, and brought his nephew as his personal aide-de-camp. A British captain was in attendance on the Field-Marshal, a very special mark of distinction, for there could be only one representative of the Emperor's. Waldersee, however, complained that he had not been allotted a major-general. He said he had been promised one, but if this were the case it must have been by somebody not connected with the Court, for the King always went into matters of ceremonial himself, and nobody knew better than he what was exactly the right thing to do. Waldersee undoubtedly

had a very high opinion of his position as a member of Prince Henry's suite, for he brought a Visitors' Book in which callers were expected to write their names. I had told the King in May that there would certainly be trouble of some kind if Prince Henry should come. If it was desired to irritate people in England, the idea certainly succeeded. In the *Times* of June 27 there appeared a telegram from its Berlin correspondent which gave instances of manners there concerning England during that sad period. True it is that some people so often mistake abuse and vulgarity for argument. I told a member of our Royal Family, who intended to pass through Germany, that I would inform the Kaiser of her designs. "You had better not," was the expected answer!

The Emperor had carried out his intention of only sending delegations which were small in number, but the size of the suite of Prince and Princess Henry of Prussia was a different affair; it consisted of ten persons to whom were added by the King three Englishmen. Other Powers had got wind of this and felt it incumbent on their dignity to send substantial forces also, so that the strain on the available accommodation was extreme.

It would have been difficult for arrangements like those of June to have been made a second time. The very numerous foreign visitors of minor importance, such as military delegations, were therefore informed that the King did not wish that they should trouble to undertake the fatiguing journey again. His idea was another instance of his consideration for his own people. Everybody recognized that guests from other nations—even if self-invited, so to say—should be specially favoured, but the real longing (it is, I know, not too strong a word) of King Edward and his family was that as many of his own subjects as possible should be accommodated in the restricted space of our glorious Abbey. This was done in the following August amid a scene of unparalleled enthusiasm.

Some time before the date originally fixed for the Coronation the King decided to introduce two new distinctions: one was the Order of Merit, and the other was the post of Aide-de-Camp General to his Majesty. Prussia

already had a similar Order, and the military office was one of long standing there. I had been told to submit detailed information concerning both these matters, and regulations suitable for the innovations were prepared. Both are, of course, highly coveted honours, and I believe their secret was well kept until the Honours List was published in June.

## CHAPTER XVI

GERMANS often criticized the Kaiser on other grounds than his alleged Anglomania. Some of his speeches were usually the cause of this, and an extraordinary hoax was played in the summer of 1902 which completely befooled apparently the office of the chief of police in Prague, which in those days formed part of the Austro-Hungarian empire ; I say apparently, for I am not so sure that the member of the staff concerned did not seize his opportunity of having a dig at the Kaiser, his official ally ; any other explanation seems incredible, for the chief's office must have been composed of intelligent individuals.

As Prague was situated in a foreign country no proceedings for *lèse-majesté* could be taken, but the official concerned risked severe punishment at the hands of the Austrian authorities. On July 3 the *Prager Polizeianzeiger*, the official journal of the city, printed at the royal printing office, had the announcement of which the following is the translation :

“ Kaiser Wilhelm (son of Kaiser Friedrich) residing at Charlottenburg, who was confined as insane in the lunatic asylum conducted by Professor Bülow in Berlin, escaped from there some weeks ago and has been missing ever since. He was seen recently in Marienburg, when he was suffering from a severe attack of talkative madness. His whereabouts is eagerly sought for, and any definite information should be forwarded here.—Imperial and Royal Police Office, Prague, June 23, 1902.”

The Kaiser had recently made an impulsive speech at Marienburg about the Poles. A week passed before the Chief of Police came across the notice, and then he sent out telegrams calling in the copies of the journal containing it, but provincial newspapers had meanwhile reproduced

the paragraph. Investigation showed that the original in the Polish language had reached the authorities from some place in Galicia ; it was drawn up in the usual official style, and the *Polizeianzeiger* used to receive about five hundred notices daily. The classification lines indicated that the document dealt with a father's request that search should be made for his lunatic son. The subordinate entrusted with the translation of the document into the official language of Bohemia declared that he had not gauged its real purport. The printer's reader passed the notice without a query because official announcements were not usually scrutinized in the printing office concerning their significance.

We were invited to attend the Coronation in Westminster Abbey, which took place on August 9, but before leaving Berlin for the purpose there was the matter of a portrait of the Emperor to be arranged. Mr. [now Sir A.] Cope, the well-known artist, had been commissioned to paint it on behalf of the United Service Club in London, and he required the uniform, which was to be the full dress of the *Garde du Corps*, white tunic, and gilt helmet surmounted by the royal eagle ; it was a most imposing raiment.

Count zu Eulenburg, the Lord Chamberlain, wrote to me from the imperial yacht about the picture. Mr. Cope was coming to Berlin, and could have a couple of sittings ; he was also to be given some photographs, and complete the work at his leisure in England. The artist refused point-blank to paint the Kaiser under these conditions, and when the matter was brought to the notice of his Majesty he placed himself, I heard, entirely in Mr. Cope's hands for as many sittings as he might require.

The Coronation ceremony was truly a soul-stirring spectacle. The intensely dramatic circumstances by which it was surrounded had raised excitement and apprehension to fever heat. The King had made a wonderful recovery, and had been able to be moved to his yacht three weeks after his operation ; but everybody wondered whether he could stand the extremely exhausting strain of the long and rigid ceremonial.

It was most interesting to watch the royal procession



enter the Abbey and proceed towards the Chancel; the King looked remarkably well, and Queen Alexandra was perfectly lovely; she might have been a young girl of twenty-five. Robes must be rather trying to the wearers, as they are so seldom put on; the Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, wrapped his tightly round his person; perhaps he felt the draught, and he was no longer a young man, but he set his coronet at a rakish angle and nothing could impair his natural dignity of demeanour.

The aged Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, was the principal figure after the King and Queen, and his Grace almost collapsed before the ceremony was at an end. There was a general sigh of intense relief as their Majesties began to proceed down the nave to the great doors, and then an unprecedented thing happened. The eldest son of some peer in the gallery set apart for those of his standing suddenly cried out: "Three cheers for the King." For the fraction of a second the congregation, thousands strong, hesitated, and then the cheers were given with one voice in absolutely magnificent and extremely affecting style.

Their Majesties were evidently hugely gratified, and the impromptu touch heartened everybody. It was followed by a superb rendering of *God Save the King*, in which the entire assemblage joined enthusiastically, and the effect was electrifying, Mrs. George Swinton's glorious voice taking its full share in the national hymn; her husband is Lyon King of Arms, and well did he become the part. The scene can never be forgotten by those privileged to witness it, and the prophets of ill-omen who had predicted that King Edward would never be crowned were utterly confounded.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was Lascelles's brother-in-law, and his Excellency was fond of relating good stories about him. Perhaps these two may not be generally known. His Grace had appointed a clergyman to an important living, and the latter called to tender his thanks for the distinction. He was a man somewhat addicted to sham humility, and said he hoped he should prove worthy of the honour, but added: "I am, unfortunately, your Grace, a poor preacher."

"I know that," was the reply ; "I've heard ye twice !"

On another occasion Dr. Temple had gone to some country parish to open a new building. He was met at the station by the Archdeacon and the rector, and drove off to the rendezvous. The rector had not met the Archbishop before, and was very nervous in his presence, but he thought it his duty to make conversation, and did so as far as he was able. Temple at last could stand this no longer and exclaimed :

"If ye must talk, talk to the Archdeacon !"

Few knew, however, what a tender heart the great prelate really possessed.

But I must get on with my reminiscences, and try to stop digressing. When another little holiday—I seem to have had a great many—came to an end after the Coronation, the Emperor invited me to dine at Potsdam on August 26. Amongst other matters, he spoke to me about the Royal Dragoons, whose Colonel-in-Chief he was, being ordered to India from South Africa. It was one of the very few cavalry regiments which never left the United Kingdom except for operations in the field. The reason was that the average stature of the men was so great that it was considered too difficult to mount them efficiently in India. I suppose that the rule had been made before the introduction there of troop horses from Australia, and when only country-breds or arabs were available as remounts. As an officer of Horse Artillery and Field Artillery I never saw any horses to compare with those from Australia which we had in India ; they were superb in every respect.

The Emperor had heard the news about his regiment when its latest monthly return had been sent to him, and he objected very strongly indeed to its departure overseas for probably thirteen years ; he always took an active interest in its welfare.

Various changes in the disposition of our land forces had been introduced as a consequence of the war in South Africa, and my explanation to the Kaiser was that the problem of reliefs for India has probably caused the old rule to be broken ; he would, I said, no doubt discuss the

matter with the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief, who were due to arrive soon afterwards.

The imperial protest was, of course, reported by me also to the King. His Majesty said, in reply, that he had "never yet heard of a Foreign Sovereign interfering with the stations to which British regiments are ordered, although the Sovereign might happen to be Honorary Colonel or Colonel-in-Chief of one of the regiments." I never inquired and I never heard whether the Emperor had been approached by the officers, or someone among them, to try to save them from their fate. If he was, I can quite understand him zealously taking their part.

The War Office was desirous of sending an officer unofficially to attend some manœuvres which were to be carried out by the Army and Navy at Borkum. They would, of course, have been very interesting for us, but the project was quite impracticable. Somebody had suggested the observer should be on board a small yacht, but he would have been quickly warned off, for the British Admiralty did not permit German officers to be present at our exercises. In cases like this it always seemed to me best to assume that the potential foe was thoroughly efficient in anything he undertook, and to make our own plans accordingly; if in actual warfare he should turn out to be less skilful than we had imagined, then so much the better for us. The idea was abandoned.

The date of the arrival of the British military mission which was to attend the manœuvres in September was rapidly approaching. The Emperor had, as already mentioned, renewed his invitation to them to Mr. Brodrick and Lord Roberts after its postponement from the previous year, and when I was in London I had given them a general outline of the proceedings to which they were much looking forward. The British officers who were to be present unofficially were, of course, to make their own arrangements, but this plan really gave them much more freedom than the great personages could enjoy.

The question also arose about the attendance of British Press correspondents. Some of the London daily and weekly journals wished to be represented and applied

to me to pave the way. Mr. Blakiston, the assistant correspondent of the *Times* in Berlin, in putting forward the well-known name of Mr. Lionel James, told me that as time was passing he had also applied for facilities to the Great General Staff; I said he had acted quite rightly, and this was the line which I had resolved to take.

The falsehoods of the previous year had decided me to leave all the selections in the hands of that body. Not many days afterwards a senior officer belonging to it called upon me and asked me to recommend anybody I wished. If the worst should come to the worst, my intention was to carry out the desire of the English Press, but I proposed, if possible, to lay the onus of choosing on the Great General Staff. Should anything reported be distasteful to the Kaiser, then the blame could be laid on his officers for having exhibited bad judgment of character. I was well aware, from various sources, that the military authorities would be much disappointed if the manœuvres should be ignored.

My visitor was much perturbed on hearing my refusal to interfere in any manner whatsoever. He said it was highly desirable that our correspondents should attend, especially as Lord Roberts was to be the Emperor's guest. His persistent arguments had no effect on me, who at last said there was an excellent reason why a British military attaché should have nothing to do with the matter. The Emperor had laid it down as an axiom that the German Army must not be criticized. If a correspondent should presume, after being warned, to utter an adverse criticism, the blame would be laid at my door. I also told my friend that he must know this as well as I did. He replied instantly :

"Yes, I know that, but his Majesty does sometimes say very foolish things !"

My companion certainly had confidence in my discretion. The Great General Staff authorized all applications, my share in the transaction being a purely formal one. Another English correspondent of world-wide renown, Mr. Melton Prior, arrived late on the scene and called upon me. I was very glad to make the acquaintance of

such a distinguished artist, but told him, in reply to his request for facilities, that I could do nothing in the matter. He was very naturally surprised and said : " But I am Melton Prior." There was no sign of vanity in his way of expressing himself ; he was merely taken aback. My reply was that with his personality, the affair was sure to end in a manner satisfactory to himself which it did.

Mr. Brodrick, Lord Roberts, and their staff which included Sir John French (Lord Ypres), the late General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny (Adjutant-General), Sir Ian Hamilton, Colonel (afterwards General Sir Henry) Sclater, and Captain Dudley Marjoribanks (now Lord Tweedmouth) who was Mr. Brodrick's son-in-law, arrived in Berlin a few days before the grand manœuvres were to commence. Their reception was not cordial, but it was sufficiently undemonstrative during the whole of their visit. Various entertainments were provided for the distinguished visitors before leaving for Frankfurt on the Oder, and they dined quite privately with the Emperor at Potsdam. For some reason I was invited again for the next day.

Two Prussian officers had been detailed to look after the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief, namely, Major Count von Roedern, a gigantic officer in the Cuirassiers of the Guard, and Baron von Salmuth, an artilleryman. A letter from Lord Roberts told me he was in doubt about the clothes to be worn when paying calls and at the Opera ; the cuirassier and his colleague were divided in opinion about uniform or plain clothes, and the question was referred to me. I forget which course I advised, but am sure it was the best one ! All the guests were very pleasant, and those who had not met Mr. Brodrick before were astonished that such a boyish-looking person could have already attained Cabinet rank. Lord Roberts, of course, fascinated everybody with whom he came in contact.

On September 9 we started about four o'clock in the morning for our destination, and the first item on the programme was a parade of the IIIrd, or Brandenburg Army Corps at Frankfurt ; this was the corps which had

successfully resisted the greatly superior French army at Vionville (Mars la Tour) on August 16, 1870. Its enemy on that occasion was as gallant as the French soldiers invariably are, but the leadership was woefully defective.

The enemy in 1902 was represented chiefly by the Vth (Posen) corps, but both sides had been largely reinforced by other troops, and each had in addition a cavalry division. After the Franco-German War the numbers employed at the great autumn manœuvres were twice, and then three times, as many as in the period before 1870; the idea was, as already mentioned, to give the higher leaders practice in handling large bodies of troops.

All manœuvres have an artificial element, because, whichever side should win, the plans must be such that the finale occurs in a region whence the combatants may be entrained or marched off to their respective garrisons, which may be a long way off. Another complicating factor had to be reckoned with also, which emphasized the unreality of the proceedings. This was the Kaiser's habit of abdicating temporarily his functions as umpire-in-chief in order to take command of the two cavalry divisions which were formed into a cavalry corps. As an imposing spectacle it was not to be excelled, but from a purely tactical angle the resulting situation was sometimes an impossible one.

At a certain stage of the proceedings this force, superb in men, horses, and precision of drill, would be seen a mile or so distant preparing to charge masses of infantry in close formation. Some 8,000 cavalry, their gorgeous uniforms glittering in the sun, would dash up to within a few yards of the riflemen who had been firing at them for several minutes, and the verdict had to be given in favour of the horse. Many German officers told me to what mistaken impressions concerning the power of cavalry this sort of thing could lead in the actual field. But there was, I believe—at least I was told so more than once—another idea besides that of training the mounted arm: it was that the men in the ranks were proud of being led by the Emperor in person, and

this was supposed, in some quarters, not royal ones, to strengthen the feeling of loyalty to the monarchy throughout the country. The men would talk about it with pride when they left the colours, it was believed ; there may have been something in the idea ; I cannot say. French, a cavalryman himself, heartily endorsed the Kaiser's views about the power of cavalry, and both refused to be converted.

The question of uniform cropped up again at these manœuvres. Lord Roberts had asked me what dress should be worn, and I told him our simple field service costume was the correct thing. The German troops, from the Emperor down, were in their campaigning uniform, the usual blue, but the Kaiser looked so distinguished in his frock-coat and Orders that our Commander-in-Chief declared we must put on something more showy than what we had been wearing, and so we did.

After five busy days the British visitors returned to England much gratified by all that had been done for them, and everything certainly had gone off splendidly. Von Roedern, the huge cuirassier, was like a little child in his affection for Lord Roberts. Talking to my wife later about him he said there was nothing he would not be proud to do for such a man ; a rigid Prussian, he had nevertheless succumbed to the extraordinary fascination which the Commander-in-Chief exerted over all with whom he came in contact. His charm was absolutely a natural one ; otherwise it could never have made itself felt in such a remarkable manner everywhere. My opinion is impartial because it had never been my good fortune to see anything of him really until he became the military head of the British Army. Mr. Brodrick, supreme in the War Office, showed very great tact in always making the hero of Kandahar the central figure.

The manœuvres were in some ways very interesting for a British officer, whose own Army had been the subject of so much hostile criticism. The British had used range-finders for years, but this was the first occasion on which the Germans had employed them, and they were kind enough to present the War Office with one of their pattern.

Formerly the firing formations had been very dense, the men in the firing line being close to each other; but our experiences had produced a new frame of mind, and in 1902 men were sometimes extended to ten paces interval. This was exactly copying Sir Ian Hamilton, who had told me that, when French asked him to take command at Elandslaagte, he extended his men at that distance at least, with very successful results. Machine guns were also at Frankfurt; only one detachment of six guns to each side, it is true, but money was not yet available for more. The Germans, whatever their criticisms might be, were usually quick to perceive and adopt anything which had proved useful.

The dominant personality of the Emperor was not always relished by his subjects; some of them had misgivings about the influence which he exercised in military matters, and foreign critics sometimes openly questioned his ability, pointing out that he was on the wrong path. A leading article in the Paris paper, *Le Temps*, of October 18, stated: "As head of the Army, William II displays the same devouring activity. His Military Cabinet is reducing more and more to the minor part of a simple executive agency, or even registry, not only the Ministry of War, but the Great General Staff itself, that admirable instrument which Moltke created and brought to such a high degree of efficiency." It was often said in Germany that an instance of this was provided when Moltke, the nephew of the illustrious leader, was appointed to succeed that exceptionally gifted soldier, von Schlieffen. I had first met the former when he was a colonel, and it struck me then that his intellect was rather below the average; I do not think the fact that Schlieffen, who was unknown to me personally until 1900, was a very pleasant man, influenced my view of his successor, who was somewhat boorish in manner. Rumour also alleged that Moltke did not feel himself fitted for the post of Chief of the Great General Staff, in other words of Commander-in-Chief; it was freely stated that the Emperor told him he should always be at hand to advise him, but this is mere hearsay.

When I was military attaché at Berlin it was an axiom



in military circles there that Germany would one day have to fight France and Russia combined, for the idea of an Anglo-German alliance was known to only a few. The Great General Staff had worked out its plans under Schlieffen, who certainly seems to have been a remarkably gifted soldier. In certain respects that body was well able to keep its secrets, but certain general propositions became known. One of these was that on the outbreak of war the German armies should pass through Belgium ; it was hoped that that kingdom would, at the worst, agree to this plan under protest, if it should not definitely join hands with the Teutons.

One reason underlying the German project was that the war strength of the German armies had already, by the beginning of this century, become so huge that the relatively few roads through the Vosges mountains would cause the columns to be of such length that they could not possibly deploy for action in anything approaching sufficient time, so that the advantage of numbers would be largely if not altogether neutralized. That region, it was felt, was too cramped strategically and tactically.

There was also another reason why passage through Belgium was resolved upon : France, the Republic, was in close alliance with Russia, the autocracy, or, as we may say, Liberty was tied to Slavery, and the Germans thought that Belgium, if not already bound secretly to the Dual Alliance, might be induced, by peaceful pressure and promises of compensation at Germany's expense, to join it when war should break out. Teutonic armies would then be awaiting an attack on their own soil, unless they should be the first to enter Belgium, and it was considered preferable for fighting to occur outside Germany. German staff officers discussed the subject with me from time to time, and its purely military aspect was eventually the subject of an article in the *Militär-Wochenblatt*.

I did not fail, of course, to report all this to London and also mentioned it in conversation there occasionally. I do not think that the British Government was interested then in the matter, preferring to wait and see what time should bring forth.

The Order of Battle of the German armies—their grouping—in case of war was kept secret, but the contemplated passage through Belgium was not ; if it had been, I should never have heard a word about it.

We shall now turn to quite an exciting political incident which occurred in the autumn of 1902, to be related in another chapter.

## CHAPTER XVII

THE treaty of peace with the Boers had not brought them everything that they hoped for, and while its terms were not, all things considered, harsh, it remained for the Liberal Government which came into power in December 1905 to remove, by a magnificent stroke of statesmanship—or, as we may say, of commonsense—every cause for discontent, and the result was seen in the response of South Africa in 1914.

In October 1902 matters were very different. We have read about President Kruger's abortive attempt to be received by the Emperor while the war was in progress; now that it was over, three celebrated Boer commanders, Botha, Delarey, and de Wet, came to Berlin. Their ostensible object was to procure aid for their fellow-countrymen in distress; but, what was far more important, they hoped to be received by the German Emperor, for this would widen the breach between his country and ours, besides being a good augury for the future.

It was a clever tactical move: peace had been concluded, and the Republics had become British territory. There was no apparent reason, therefore, why his Majesty should not grant an audience to the King's subjects, who, after all, had the strong support behind them of Prince Carolath's appeal on their behalf; nay, the Empress Augusta, who was moved by their sufferings, had given that appeal her own personal support. It seemed certain that the audience would be granted, and the mere fact of its having taken place was bound to be a severe diplomatic blow for England, because its moral effect on her many enemies would have been very great.

The Emperor was in a very difficult position. Quite apart from any political dream he must, as a soldier, have

been most desirous of conversing with three such distinguished leaders. A friend of ours, Captain (afterwards General) von Lüttwitz, had been with the Boer forces, and he told me that they never had more than about thirty thousand men in the field at any one time; yet they had held at bay for more than two years a British army which was for a considerable period sixfold more numerous than its enemy; but he fully recognized the vast difficulties caused by a foe with no communications to worry him.

Of course one can prove anything by the aid of statistics, but the foreigner would only look at the actual figures, and the fact remained that instead of the triumphal march through London, anticipated by some generals and others, taking place in the summer of 1900, our unwieldy strength had been rudely tried by a small number of undisciplined farmers led by their fellows. Our system of military training, and too much self-confidence, had much to do with the prolongation of the struggle. Our commanders and staff officers had been taught as an axiom that once you captured the enemy's capital he was done for. Even if this were necessarily true in Europe the Boers had no capital whose loss could affect their strategy. Nor had our former easy victories over badly armed semi-savages in the Soudan been a very efficient training school.

The Emperor must, then, have yearned to see these heaven-born generals; most of us would have greatly appreciated a conversation with any one among them; but there was also another special reason which would, one should think, have influenced the Kaiser. His reception of the commanders would have largely helped to efface, even if it should not altogether obliterate, the decidedly bad impression left on German public opinion when he declined to receive President Kruger.

On the other hand, he had no desire to create further bad blood between his empire and England, which had already shown that patience has its limits. When he heard that Botha and his two companions were coming to Berlin he had it intimated to them that he would see

them provided they were presented by the British ambassador. This was the procedure laid down by the etiquette of the Prussian Court, except perhaps in the case of some officer who might be presented by the military attaché.

Now the three visitors had been using what may be termed decidedly disloyal language, considering that they had become, however unwillingly, British subjects. When it looked as if an audience was likely to be granted feeling in this country ran high. As the Boer generals must have been willing to go a long way in order to procure an interview, it seemed unlikely that they should allow a mere formality to upset their plan.

If they had asked the ambassador to present them, and if his Excellency was aware that the Emperor wished to see them, he could not have refused to put forward the request. All of which leads me to the conclusion that the Kaiser, while intimating that he would receive the generals under the condition stated, also had them informed at the same time that Sir Frank Lascelles would refuse to ask for an audience for them, so that his Majesty could not therefore grant their wish. True it is that this train of reasoning shows the extent to which a course of diplomacy may infect ordinary mental processes, and divert them from their course of growth. It is, however, also based on the fact that the ambassador was not consulted about the matter, so that whatever use may have been made by the Emperor of his Excellency's name, the latter had not either to give or refuse his consent.

The Kaiser must have been greatly disappointed at not seeing the visitors, but he was due to start for Sandringham on November 8, and no doubt did not wish to do anything to mar his reception there. The French and German newspapers were full of the Boer generals' treasonable speeches, and their reception by Berlin was splendid from their point of view, but they did not collect much cash nor remain there long. Short as their stay was, however, they put in some quick work, and circulated a number of unpleasant things about us.

There was a big procession along the Wilhelm Strasse

where the Embassy was situated, and some German patriot flung a brick through the window of the ambassador's study which was on the ground-floor, but a special police force kept the crowd moving, while some cheers were given for the Boers. My wife was heard speaking English and a boy threw a handful of mud, which fortunately only fell into her carriage. Matters might, however, have been much worse, and we are so unaccustomed in England to anti-foreign demonstrations that a small one abroad is apt to make one such appear unduly impressive.

An occurrence in some British regiment unfortunately got into the German newspapers. The subalterns had tried an unpopular youngster by a mock court-martial, a course which was sometimes adopted in those days in order to instil proper ideas into an erring boy's head ; on the Continent he would, of course, have fought one or more duels in consequence. The Germans reasoned like this : if this sort of thing could happen to a British officer in a British regiment, was it likely that the English Army should shrink from committing acts of barbarism on defenceless Boer women and children ? Of course not, and therefore the allegations against it must be true, and what had not come to light was no doubt still worse.

The hostility to and hatred of England had in no degree diminished with the conclusion of peace. A German lady, whose family I had known since childhood, told me a good deal about this one day in October. She was in the best possible position to know the facts ; her husband was a distinguished general who stood close to the Emperor, and he was also a friend of mine. She told me that everybody in Berlin was convinced we had purchased peace by promising the enemy three millions sterling, besides other concessions, and that we were now supposed (October) to be backing out of our undertaking. This was the reason, it was alleged, why the three leaders were visiting Germany, so as to collect some money. Otherwise, she went on, they would have had no right whatever to come there to beg.

The stories broadcasted in the Press about the inhuman conduct of our officers and men in South Africa were, she

said, generally believed because the papers vouched for their truth, and it was this which had enraged the German officers when Mr. Chamberlain, in 1901, had described their own action in the Franco-German War respecting unofficial belligerents ; his statements, however, had been grossly misrepresented. German professors and school teachers were similarly inculcating hatred of England in the minds of the generation which had attained manhood by 1914, and they could see nothing good in our mode of life ; one of them said, after a visit to this country, where he found he could come and go as he pleased without filling up forms, that the freedom of the individual in England was nothing better than "pure barbarism" ; his viewpoint was different to ours.

While the Chancellor, Bülow, had been more circumspect after the outburst caused in England by his vulgar speech in the Reichstag of January 8, the Press remained bitterly hostile and some of it was obscene. A so-called comic journal, *Kladderadatsch*, the least offensive one of its kind in Germany, had a drawing—one must call it by some name—in October which is worth mentioning as being typical of some German Press intellects and taste.

It depicted the "Devil and his Grandmother"—a German phrase whose origin is unknown to me—in Hell ; ballet-girls were seen in the background, a huge pot was boiling, red-hot tongs were ready, and a carriage stood empty at the entrance to the bottomless pit waiting for King Edward. Underneath was the legend :

"The recovery of fat Edward [*der dicke Eduard*] causes dissension in an unholy family, because the devil's grandmother does not believe that her grandson will ever bring him."

Satan's ancestress had her descendant by the ear, and was inflicting corporal punishment on him in her rage that their prey should have eluded them again.

The influence of the German—like every other—Press was enormous, and moulded the thoughts and sentiments of scores of millions, and the lead which it gave during the three years 1900 to 1903 had its inevitable effect ; adults detested us, and children were encouraged to gaze

upon sights which should make them grow up cruel and vindictive. What passes for facetiousness in one country is often considered vulgar or even filthy in another, and Germans, or at least Prussians, have not usually very much humour. It has been already mentioned that a German may be rude—nay, offensive—to a foreigner, but if the latter should presume to look sour in consequence, the other is hurt, if not angry. Perhaps he does not mean to be so rude as he actually is, and merely wishes to make his meaning clear.

When the Great War burst upon the world it was to be expected that British writers and caricaturists would see what they could do in their respective spheres, but there was this immense difference between the English and most of the German Press. The latter was in the unfortunate position of having reached its zenith in vulgarity long before 1914; the best it could do was to live up to its reputation, whereas British journals had virgin fields before them. They were, of course, exaggerative and frequently excruciatingly funny, but never were they, so far as I know, dirty or cruel. Those connected with them had too much good taste, but they enraged the Germans. The Kaiser's peculiarities lent themselves to caricature; he had a fondness for phrases, such as "the mailed fist," and the war had been only a very short time in progress when remonstrances reached us from Germany, of which one may be quoted as typical of others.

"Fancy, daring to treat our glorious Kaiser so!"

This treatment was mild indeed when compared with that meted out to his English relations before 1914. Another thrust was made after the retreat from Mons and before the battle of the Marne; it was: "And oh, how your soldiers ran!"

The obvious reply was that while our troops had been overwhelmed by numbers in 1914, the Prussians at Auerstädt (Jena) in 1806 were in vastly superior strength, but their crushing defeat had laid their country prostrate. As I said before, the Germans looked at things from one point of view only, and all this was concerted and clumsy propaganda intended to frighten us.



They had, however, a softer side to their nature. My wife's aunt, pure British on both sides for generations, had married a Baron von Richthofen, a near relative of the Foreign Minister's; her husband had died long ago, and she was an old woman when the war came, physically unable to travel, and she remained in Berlin or Potsdam throughout the struggle. Not once, she told me afterwards, was anything unkind, to say nothing of anything offensive, uttered in her presence.

In July 1914, when the entry of England into the approaching war was thought, in German circles, to be probable, our boy was studying at St. Avold, near Metz, and was living with the kindest of people, Herr and Frau von Kaltenborn-Stachau, whose associations were all military; one of the family had been Minister of War. He had been received everywhere in the most hospitable manner; his passion was for aeroplanes, and he had made his first flight at the age of thirteen in a rickety machine. The Germans allowed him to examine their military aeroplanes, he rode their troop-horses, and was allowed to go anywhere; the generals and other officers, and their families, had taken to him, and his stay was a most enjoyable one.

He was sent off suddenly to England on July 31 when mobilization was ordered, but had time to pay a few hurried farewell calls. Everybody was most kind, and one of the generals was greatly affected, although there was much anxiety as to the line which the British Government would take, the general idea being that it would side with France and Russia. Our boy was killed a fortnight after landing at Boulogne. He had, however, quickly learnt that some things were not permissible: there was a large collie in the house where he lived, and one day he twisted the dog's whiskers into a moustache on the Kaiser's model, and was told at once to undo them.

So far as I have been able to ascertain the facts, the cases of ill-treatment of our wounded and other prisoners were due to educated Germans, whereas those of our men who were assigned to small farmers were treated as members of the family; there were no officials present

to order it otherwise. The Germans are, as we have seen, rough among themselves in some respects, and it is notorious that when a British medical officer was captured in the war his enemies infinitely preferred being operated on by him rather than by their own surgeons.

Roughness may, however, be overdone in the attempt to harden people. Already a quarter of a century ago nervous diseases were quite common in Germany, and her citizens made no secret of the fact; they talked openly about their ailments, and I should say that educated Germans were on the whole highly strung; I noticed the same thing when I was in North China twenty years ago, and one of the French generals there asked me whether I had observed this.

I attribute this condition of nervous tension partly to rough treatment, and partly to the ceaseless propaganda carried on by the German Press and professors over a series of years, while the precarious situation of the Balance of Power, perched as it came to be, on a tight-rope, was not likely to ease the strain. Too much food and too little exercise probably contributed also to the acid humour of the German Press; in large cities there were numbers of kiosks where all kinds of very strong mineral waters were dispensed, and they did a decidedly brisk business. But tactlessness was not confined to Germans, as the following incident will show.

A curious encounter occurred between two English ladies who were visiting Germany. Although acquainted, it was well known that neither appreciated the good qualities of the other. They were seated on opposite sides of the table at a dinner-party, and the conversation had turned on the difference in social customs in various countries. One of the two guests, who was not blessed with wealth, asked the other, a very rich woman, during a sudden lull, how it was that some people got into society when they had nothing but their purse to recommend them. The charge did not fit, because the one attacked had other qualifications as well. She was quick to answer: "I'll tell you why it is; we have more brains than other people, and know how to use them!"

Towards the end of October a telegram came to say that the King wished me to proceed to England in order to meet the Emperor on his arrival, and accompany him at his inspection of his regiment, the Royal Dragoons, at Shorncliffe. As there was nothing to keep me in Berlin, my wife and I started in very good time on another little holiday. The Kaiser arrived at Port Victoria in his magnificent yacht, the *Hohenzollern*, a vessel of about six thousand tons. I had never seen her before, but was taken over all the cabins, which were, as one would have expected, very comfortable.

His Majesty arrived early in the forenoon and we travelled by special train to the camp. The late Lord Basing was in command, and the regiment was faultless, the Kaiser declared, in every single respect. The weather was unfortunately detestable; it pelted with rain the whole time, and a violent gale was also blowing, which we got the full benefit of; this curtailed the proceedings to some extent, and then there was luncheon in the officers' mess. The Emperor spoke very nicely, as he was well able to do when he chose, and he had also a very happy thought: he announced his intention of presenting the sum of five hundred pounds for the use of the married non-commissioned ranks. Lord Basing's speech in reply could not possibly have been improved upon.

When the meal was over the journey to Sandringham was resumed, the train passing through the Blackwall Tunnel under the Thames on its way to Liverpool Street Station. The Emperor had brought a small suite with him so as not to press unduly on the accommodation at Sandringham. He was very fond of shooting, and was a really good shot, using, as far as I recollect, a light sixteen-bore gun. This was, by the way, mentioned in a London paper a day or two afterwards as the imperial "twelve-inch bore!" But he was to have a new experience in Norfolk in the form of partridge driving. Those who have enjoyed this sport know that a driven partridge flies very fast at all times, while in a strong wind or gale even the best shots often find the birds extremely difficult to kill. A member of the imperial suite told me on our journey

to London that his master would more than hold his own with anybody—say the Prince of Wales (King George) or Sir Harry Stonor, and I suppose there never were two better shots in the world. I don't know what would have happened if the weather had been pleasant, but it blew very hard. I asked the Emperor afterwards what luck he had had and he replied, "I simply couldn't touch a feather."

It was during this visit to England that the late Field-Marshal Lord Nicholson told me a remarkable instance of military insight on the part of a statesman who was not supposed to know anything about strategy or tactics. I had heard that several people had claimed to have originated the block-house system during the Boer War, but my impression was that Lord Kitchener was the founder of it. During a long conversation with Sir William Nicholson (as he then was) on November 18, he asked me for the Kaiser's opinions respecting Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener.

My answer was that his Majesty had the greatest admiration for the former's gifts as a tactician, and envied him his extraordinary influence over troops under his command; as regards Lord Kitchener he thought that his abilities lay rather in organization.

"Now, why does he?" inquired Nicholson.

"Oh, I suppose his block-house system in South Africa is the reason," was my reply.

Nicholson then told me that when Lord Milner, the Governor of the Cape, came to England in 1901, Mr. Balfour was the third member of their conference at which the situation in the theatre of war was discussed. Mr. Balfour then proposed the block-house system, which was immediately adopted, and he drafted the telegram on the subject at once in Nicholson's room, while the latter discussed the details of the plan with Lord Milner.

The German Government was much troubled about its financial position in 1902. Trade had been bad, and army expenditure was severely scrutinized in the Reichstag, chiefly by the large body of Social Democrats. Russia and France had very large cavalry forces available,

and the former was continually increasing her troops on her western front. Germany was not at that time in a position to keep in step with her two powerful neighbours, and, besides, her field artillery, the first quick-firing system to be introduced in Europe, was no longer sufficiently efficient in material. Some years passed before matters were rectified, and an idea of the improvements made by 1914 may be gained from the fact that the German Army Estimates for 1902 and 1903 were each less than twenty-nine millions sterling, whereas in the year when the World War commenced they had risen to about sixty millions. Part of this large increase was, however, defrayed by a portion of a capital levy of fifty millions to be raised in instalments spread over a short period.

In April 1914, when I was staying with an old friend, who had recently been Governor of Metz, he received his demand note for the annual instalment, so I said he would not, as a good Prussian, grumble at the impost. Of course he should not, was the answer. Then I inquired whether, when the levy money was all spent, even the German Government, which could override the Reichstag in so many ways, could venture to raise further money in the same manner. "Ah," he replied, "I fear not; you see these horrible Social Democrats are becoming too powerful, and the Army must suffer in consequence." When August 1914 came their party was as strongly in favour of war as anybody else; this was, of course, due to the fact that Germany was made to appear as the booty coveted by her enemies.

The War Office in 1902 regarded war with Germany as quite within the bounds of possibility, earlier perhaps rather than later. I did not quite follow all the arguments. That the Navy must bear the brunt was acknowledged, but as regards the Army the reasoning was not clear to me. I was told that during the first three or four months, when new forces were being raised and trained, we should have three Army Corps available for service outside the British Isles. As they could not invade and defeat Germany in Europe, would their capture of the German colonies, I was asked, bring the enemy to his knees? I

felt confident that it would not. Moreover, the command of the sea was not assured until it should be an accomplished fact, and the ocean is large, besides being an unstable element. How, then, could the United Kingdom be denuded of its few and only effective fighting troops ?

These were academic discussions, and I could vouch for only two things : in spite of diplomatic opinion to the contrary, Germany hated us, while our Navy and her Army were so extremely efficient and numerous that neither of us could beat the other. It was not foreseen at the beginning of the century that the Germans would be able, in a few years' time, to bombard Dover from the opposite coast, but even if this had been the case then, Dover is not England ; it might be evacuated, and our factories should have produced guns powerful enough to put the others out of business. In war time each side must expect to suffer losses.

The assertion concerning German military efficiency seemed perhaps a bold one to make after the manœuvres of 1902. A good many German officers, friends of mine, had been complaining more and more about the subordination of real training to spectacular effect, and these criticisms were uttered in high military circles ; manœuvre ground had latterly always been chosen which would afford a suitable opportunity for a grand cavalry charge, led by the Emperor, provided that the two opposing commanders should act in the manner expected of them.

This did not, however, invariably happen. In 1902 the G.O.C. of the Blue Force defeated his Red opponent, which was contrary to plan. Nevertheless, an impossible manœuvre was executed so as to allow of the imperial cavalry charge. The ultimate result was that the erring corps commander was removed from his command, and as he blamed his divisional generals, and his staff, these were also either retired or transferred to other appointments. Occurrences of this kind were not, of course, talked about openly, but the Kaiser's subordinates were more likely to agree with than to differ from him when they believed him to be in the wrong—a bad thing for any public service.

But then manœuvres are not war, and my view was that if blunders were committed by the Germans at the former, other armies were likely to make equally big mistakes, while I believed the Great General Staff to be by far the finest in the world ; but I did not for a moment think it could beat England.

I got on quite well with the military authorities as regards our official relations. A letter from the War Office informed me that all our efforts to manufacture a suitable smokeless powder for blank cartridges for field-guns had failed ; this was at the end of November, and I was told to see if anything could be done in Germany to help us out of the difficulty. The Minister of War directed the artillery authorities to send me a sample, and I was then asked what quantity was required. Our difficulties were increased by the fact that we had then no metal cartridge cases, so I suggested twelve cartridges complete or any less number. They sent me the dozen, a gift which was greatly appreciated, and certainly showed a most friendly spirit.

The rapid progress of Social Democratic tendencies among the population caused the Emperor to harangue the recruits in Berlin ; he said : “ I have given you a handsome coat ” (*einen schönen Rock*), and told them to live up to its traditions. He was rather alarming in his annual inspections of them after they had become fit to take their places in the ranks. These youngsters of the Guard were mostly strong country lads, less quick of intelligence than men from the cities. His questions covered a wide range of subjects ; besides examining them in purely military matters he would put queries designed to test their intelligence and quickness in giving information. For instance, he would ask a man for the name of the general officer commanding the Guard Corps, who was standing close by ; this had, of course, been carefully impressed on him ; then the Kaiser would inquire : “ What does he look like ? Describe him.” Another wretched youth would be asked if the G.O.C. was a nice sort of fellow ; whether he treated the men well, and so on. It was rather cruel, but the recruits had sense enough to give suitable replies !

To these brief references concerning military affairs may be added one more, to show that no detail was omitted which could add to the pomp of ceremonial parades, and incidentally increase the martial spirit. After the Franco-German War the great Moltke said, when the French Governments of the day were making every effort to prepare to avenge the defeat of their country, that the French are temperamentally much more military than the Germans, and that it therefore behoved the latter to make up by numbers what they lacked in genius. The average Frenchman is undoubtedly a soldier by instinct.

Cavalry bands were abolished in France in order to increase the number of men in the ranks ; the Germans, having much the larger population, retained them, and had had the happy idea of making them still more attractive than they had been. Grown-up people as well as children love the kettle-drummer ; he is so artistic, and in a Prussian Guards' regiment he was trained to wave his arms above his head when trotting or cantering past the saluting base. It was a lovely sight to watch, especially when the kettle-drummer happened to be a negro clothed in the brilliant uniform of the hussars with his dolman hanging from his shoulders.

This very effective adjunct had long been abolished in the British Army. It had been, so I was told in Germany, introduced there after the Seven Years War, when a hussar regiment had been surprised in camp ; the officers and men had turned out in such a hurry that they had only time to pull on one sleeve of the tunic before mounting, charging, and defeating, their enemy. The dolman was then introduced as a special mark of honour. Showy uniforms are undoubtedly attractive for recruiting ; I remember marching from Woolwich to Exeter more than forty years ago with a battery of Royal Horse Artillery, and the number of applicants, who wished to wear its uniform and appurtenances—more brilliant then than now—was sufficient to have formed several batteries. In my young days there was a Colonel Sarsfield Greene, R.H.A., a very handsome man, perfectly proportioned, and of gigantic physique ; he used to say that all he cared



for as an officer of the *Right of the Line* was the uniform and the band.

It has been mentioned that everything in Germany was done according to law and order, and the next chapter shall show that this system extended to purely social entertainments such as balls ; except under certain well-defined conditions you could not give one at all ; any hostess rash enough to make the attempt would have incurred ostracism, official and private. I once heard of an intrepid lady, the wife of a foreign diplomatist, who believed herself capable of overriding the law, but the experiment proved that she was mistaken.

## CHAPTER XVIII

OUR last season in Berlin, that of 1902-3, was much more gay than the two which had immediately preceded it, for they had been interrupted by Court mourning. We were invited to the three State Balls, the first one a huge affair with a couple of thousand guests where only girls danced, while the married women looked on. The two others had less than half that number, and were very enjoyable functions for everybody.

All Court and other entertainments in the German capital were managed strictly by rule, which may be summarized thus : you shall do this, and you shall not do that, so that if one learnt the regulations there was no excuse for going wrong. To take a State Ball as an instance, each guest received with the invitation a leaflet which informed him or her in what rooms everybody was to assemble according to rank ; wives of Excellencies were accorded the special privilege of supping with the cream of the company, a somewhat remarkable fact in a country where Woman was usually relegated to an inferior position. The hour at which supper should commence was also notified, as a rule at 10.30 o'clock, and everybody knew beforehand in which room one was to feast. Here Mrs. Waters scored over her husband ; being at last the wife of an " Excellency," her proper place for supper was in the room with the "All-Highest," whereas her worse half came into category number two, along with others of his standing, *Chargés d'Affaires*, and the minor lights of the Diplomatic Corps ; as at St. Petersburg, the last-named were only invited to the big crushes. The dancing ladies and gentlemen—sometimes only certain persons, selected beforehand, were allowed to dance—also had a special supper apartment reserved for them. A State Ball under such

conditions was perfect of its kind, for everybody knew what to do and where to go.

Besides the Court Balls and a State Performance at the Opera there was a number of private balls ; only married ladies were invited to some of these, which was all the more pleasant for them, and, besides, a party of this kind was less formal than one at which girls, whose deportment was subject to the strictest censorship, were also present ; " bright young persons," no matter what their wishes were, had to conform strictly to rule. They stood in the ballroom all the time, and took a turn with everybody who asked them to dance. My wife inquired from a Prussian officer, a very nice man, what would happen if a maiden should go and sit out with her partner instead of remaining in the room. " She would not do it twice," he replied when he grasped the purport of the astonishing question ; but they really enjoyed themselves, which after all was the main thing, and combined pleasure with exercise, as some of them told me.

Berlin society of those days was relatively small, and a very close borough, as was the case in London at an earlier period. A quarter of a century ago the system followed in Berlin would have been impossible of application in London ; society in the English metropolis was so large that it had inevitably split up into sections, whereas this was not the case in Germany, where the sole qualification—and it was an essential one—was : were you or were you not " born " ? It did not suffice to affirm that you had " descent," the arbiters knew whether you had or had not.

After the Emperor and Empress the two most important figures in Berlin society were the *Vortänzer*, or—as we may say—the Masters of the Ceremonies, and they were also by far the hardest-worked individuals. They were bachelors, young officers of the Guards, selected by the Kaiser before the commencement of each season. No hostess would have dared to give a ball without having first arranged for one of these officers to be present at and to manage it. On special occasions, such as the great Charity Ball at the Opera House, which the Emperor and Empress attended, both *Vortänzer* had to take charge of the proceedings.

The season was always a very short one, and a number of balls had to be fitted in somehow, but this period of gaiety also synchronized with the training of the new batch of recruits, so that a *Vortänzer* stationed at Potsdam got scarcely any rest, night or day, while the season lasted. He had not one moment's respite from attending the early morning parades; to have been one minute late would have been fatal. It was, of course, a great honour to be selected for the social duties mentioned, and there is a good deal to be said in favour of rigid discipline generally. My wife knew both the *Vortänzer* rather well in her last season, and I assume her judgment was sound when she wrote home that they were "perfectly charming."

As regards this combination of work with pleasure a story recalls itself to my mind. When that great horseman, the late Captain Roddy Owen, was quartered at Aldershot, Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood was in command there, and as Owen was nearly always absent for race riding a considerable period elapsed before Sir Evelyn laid eyes on him for the first time. When they did meet the general said:

"You never seem to be here, Captain Owen, for I have not hitherto been able to make your acquaintance."

"My loss, sir!" was Roddy's instant reply.

A feature of the Court Balls was the stately dances such as minuets and gavottes. These were rehearsed at Court many times under the very vigilant and strict eye of the Ballet mistress, who on the night of the ball was to be seen perched in a tiny embrasure high up in the room following every movement. The slightest mistake on the part of a dancer would have called forth instant and severe reproof. These dances were performed in front of the Throne, and were led by the Crown Prince. On one occasion he had engaged a very handsome foreign lady to be his partner, and the Emperor and Empress disapproved so strongly of this proceeding that they rose up and walked away.

Each *Vortänzer* wore a chain of office round his neck like a mayor, and he arranged and led the cotillon which was a feature of every ball. For this particular dance the

boys and girls engaged themselves ahead, and a popular girl had her list full for the season months beforehand ; she carried a little note-book in which she entered her engagements so that no mistakes should arise.

Supper was a very important item in the proceedings, and a girl was also permitted to engage herself for this. When the doors were opened there was a great rush for seats, and couples might sometimes get separated ; the doors of the supper-room were kept locked, otherwise all the young men would have reserved their places by tying two chairs together with a handkerchief, and this did occasionally happen by bribing the servants.

There was a great gulf fixed between the married and the unmarried ; supper for the former was an elaborate affair, whereas that for the girls and young men was of the simplest description in a German house. It happened once somehow or other that my wife and I had been dancing together at a small and informal party, just as supper was announced ; the guests for the meal had not been told off beforehand as there were so few people present, and when the door leading into the supper-room was thrown open we were out of sight in a window. Our hostess, Princess von Donnersmarck, began to look round for somebody who was evidently missing, and we felt she was searching the room for us. We thought it would look greedy, when the situation dawned upon us, to go forward, as we saw our respective partners had evidently been allotted to somebody else, so when the supper-room door was closed again, we thought we would follow the young ones to their apartment. They were seated at long, narrow tables on which was placed cold food of the simplest description, such as slices of meat and ham, with rolls and butter, and a sweet or two. The meal was sufficiently satisfying if not attractive, but it was evidently on the usual lines. When we had finished, our hostess came up much perturbed ; she had imagined that we had left early as she had been unable to find and send us in with those who counted, and she was quite distressed on learning how we had arranged matters.

Married women were supposed also to be of more ample

proportions than the unmarried. My wife wanted a new frock once and went to one of the leading dressmakers, an Austrian. After she had ordered what she required, the other said that perhaps her mother would come with her to see the dress tried on. When she explained that her mother was in England, the dressmaker suggested the lady with whom she was staying, and then learnt that she was speaking to a married woman. After trying on, the frock eventually arrived, and was then discovered to be thickly padded with rows and rows of lace frills on the shoulders, hips, and stomach, so as to give the wearer the appearance suited to her standing among her sex.

Princess Antoine Radziwill was usually considered, or considered herself to be, the leader of Berlin society. Her father was the Marquis de Castellane, and her mother was a member of the celebrated Talleyrand family. Princess Antoine was a clever woman, but like a good many other people of ability, she was reputed to possess a very sharp tongue. Her relations and most of Berlin stood greatly in awe of her; if it was desired to frighten one of her delightful nieces the remark would be made: "I'll tell your aunt Marie!" This was usually sufficient to bring the culprit to reason. The old lady expected flowers to be sent to her on her birthday, and let it be clearly understood that these were to be in pots with their roots. Anybody unsophisticated or careless enough to send merely cut flowers was made to realize the mistake, while the gift was thrown on one side. The princess did not profess to care for women, but so far as I was concerned she was always pleasant enough, and interesting to talk to.

Her husband was a courteous gentleman, and uncle of our friend, Princess Blücher (born Radziwill), and I believe that the old Emperor, William I, had greatly wished to marry his mother, an Austrian lady, daughter of the Prince de Clary; political considerations, however, caused his union with a princess of Saxe-Weimar, but he was always very fond of his first love's son, with whom he remained on intimate terms until his death in 1888.

We lost two very kind friends when the Duchess of Albany and her daughter Princess Alice (now Countess of

Athlone) left Potsdam for England at the end of February ; we had received many favours at their hands. The Berlin season of 1902-3 was not to come to an end before a dramatic surprise had been sprung upon it.

Many earnest efforts had been made during the course of years to induce the incomparable Sarah Bernhardt to come to Berlin, but she held to her vow that her marvellous art should never be polluted by the German atmosphere until, to the amazement of the world, she reconsidered her decision. I forget how the matter was arranged, but an agreement was come to, and all Berlin rushed for tickets to see the celebrated actress. There was, however, a hitch at the last moment because one of the plays which she proposed to present was *l'Aiglon*. The Prussian authorities considered that it was unsuitable in the circumstances, and it may be that the divine Sarah's original intention had been, so to speak, to give tit for tat. I saw her in *La Tosca* and *Fédora*, and Mr. (now Sir George) Grahame, our remarkably able ambassador in Brussels, who had known her well in his Paris days, and who was an exceptionally good judge of art, declared that in Berlin she surpassed all her former triumphs. Nearly twenty years had elapsed since I had last seen her, in *La Dame aux Camélias*, where she was superb, and time had certainly not detracted from her amazing gifts.

We went to call on Countess von Brockdorff, the principal lady in personal attendance on the Empress, one day in March, when the Court was in residence in Berlin. We were in the courtyard of the palace on our way home when the Emperor rode in. The Guard was out in a flash presenting arms and drums beating, when his Majesty saw and rode up to us. While we were exchanging greetings, the drums continued beating, and he waved to the officer to stop the noise. This was evidently mistaken for a sign that the drummers were not up to the mark, and they drummed, if possible, harder than ever. Some time elapsed before his Majesty could get his wish understood in the row, for the more energetic were his gestures the more hard work did the drummers put in !

The Kaiser said he wanted to talk to me about the

Turkish question ; it had, of course, nothing to do with me, but he wished me to give the ambassador early information about something which had only just occurred. It appeared that the Sultan had sent an emissary to Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, the German ambassador in Constantinople, to complain about British encroachments in the Aden hinterland, always a source of trouble in those days. The Sultan wished the ambassador to advise him about his course of action. His Excellency had replied that personally he thought his Majesty had better accede to the British demands, but had added that he must, of course, take the Kaiser's instructions on the situation.

William II had only received von Bieberstein's telegram a few hours before he saw me, but he had replied at once that the Sultan had better comply immediately with the British request, and withdraw the Turkish troops "as far back as possible," since the English Government had been kept waiting for thirty years. This prompt action of the Emperor's was greatly appreciated by Sir Frank Lascelles, who telegraphed the news to London on that afternoon, and received a reply the same evening from Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, instructing him to thank the Emperor very cordially for his action. All this occurred on March 16, and two days afterwards an *Irade* was issued at Constantinople ordering the withdrawal of the Turkish troops until the boundary should be delimited. This was quick work, and the Kaiser's prompt and effective intervention on behalf of England saved the British Government a great deal of trouble, and expense. The incident should also be mentioned in view of the negotiations and intrigues, which have been disclosed since the Great War, concerning the relations of the Ottoman Empire with European Powers.

The King summoned me to London about a week afterwards, as he wished to discuss the question of the attendance of German officers at the forthcoming manoeuvres in this country. It was only natural and reasonable that the German authorities should wish to send a Mission, for the Secretary of State for War, the Commander-in-Chief, and several other British officers had been very



generously treated at Frankfurt on the Oder in the preceding autumn.

The War Office, or some important members of it, did not, for some inscrutable reason, wish any foreign officers to witness our manœuvres. Why? Goodness only knows. Some excuses were suggested, but they were so devoid of sense that they were cast aside in the search for something less puerile; at the bottom of it all was the dark atmosphere of Suspicion. I have witnessed a good many manœuvres, some of them open to everybody, some carried out under restrictions more or less rigorous, but in no case was there any important information of the slightest use to outsiders to be gained; some blunders were disclosed from which it would have been dangerous to generalize.

King Edward was all in favour of returning the hospitality which had been extended to the British Army, and of acknowledging the great courtesy shown in the matter of smokeless powder at a time when we had no equivalent secret to impart, even if our wise men had wished to give something commensurate in return. His Majesty decided therefore that the Germans should be invited officially. We talked about a number of subjects, and then some members of his family came in. There was a portrait which had recently been added to the collection in the Palace, which I wanted to see, and we all went to look at it. The frame was rather unsuitable and I began to say: "An early . . ." and hesitated for the word; *Victorian* was on my lips, but seemed to be not quite the correct expression, hence my momentary hesitation. The King showed his usual ready tact and interposed: "Early English." Another member of the Royal Family not only winked but laughed, and began an anti-German tirade which drove his Majesty away from me.

He wished me to see Mr. Brodrick and tell him what he had decided about the manœuvres, but that statesman had meanwhile taken the case out of the hands of the soldiers, and settled the matter himself by asking the Foreign Office to invite a German Mission. But the military objectors became aware of this only after the

event. After a holiday I returned to Berlin in order to take leave of the Emperor and Empress as the tenure of my appointment would expire on June 2, when I would have held it for three years under the new rule.

Their Majesties received me at Potsdam on May 20; both were very pleasant, and the Emperor said he would send me his photograph in a British Field-Marshal's uniform, which he signed as such; besides remembering his promise he had it very nicely framed. It was evident from what the Kaiser said that he was disappointed, and hurt, that King Edward should have visited Paris and Rome while, so far, omitting Berlin. The same feeling existed also in German circles. It was strange that offence should have been taken about this, after the utterances of German public men, the German Press, and German society generally, accentuated as they had so often been by the picture papers. The idea that England should put up with all kinds of insults and yet be prepared to meet Germany as if nothing had happened was ineradicable. One of our ablest diplomatists told me shortly afterwards in London that one had "to be rough" with the Germans, otherwise they would not understand or respect one. Jealousy, hatred, all kinds of factors, had combined to bring about the sad state of affairs.

It was stated in Chapter IX that the continental Press is not always above suspicion pecuniarily, and a man who controlled one of the leading Berlin journals made a concrete proposal to me towards the close of the Boer War, but before the end was in sight. He was a very wealthy man, and told me that the policy of the newspaper in question should be changed in our favour for the sum of £100,000; but I said this would not be worth our while. Of course the French Press had not lagged behind its German contemporaries at this time; but then the Prussian, and many of the other German Courts, were very closely related to our Royal Family, and it was notorious that most of their members were intensely Anglophobe; besides, the French temperament is more mercurial than the Teutonic, so the two cases were not quite parallel.

But the Kaiser himself was not, I think, anti-British,

although he was always seeking, as German Emperor, how he could further the interests of his country. Talking to me at Potsdam when I was taking leave of him he said, quite truly, that our latest efforts at army reform would lead us nowhere; he still stood by his own plan, put forward more than once previously, of a territorial army properly organized, but this scheme had, as we have seen, to wait until Mr. Haldane was in office as Secretary of State for War in 1906. The Kaiser's own acts show he was sincere in his wish to see our land forces made capable of rapid expansion on mobilization; before he spoke to me in May 1903 he had frequently returned to the subject, and at times when Anglo-German relations were more strained than usual. Black suspicion might think he had put forward the idea with the intention of landing us in a quagmire, but nobody could accuse Mr. Haldane of this. In spite of the Kaiser's harangues about British luxury and degeneracy, I am sure he felt—perhaps subconsciously—that England was the most powerful and the most dependable nation with which to be linked up if this should be possible.

The Emperor, on the occasion of my farewell audience, questioned me again about my experiences in Germany, and I answered him frankly. There seemed to be no longer any chance, even before the Triple Entente was formed—which to my mind hastened the day of battle—of Anglo-German relations being placed on a really good footing; each side suspected the other, and I thought that the best that could be hoped for was that things should not get worse. The Triple Entente, from my angle, caused a state of very unstable equilibrium, for it was so exceedingly delicately balanced.

The Kaiser spoke about King Edward's share in public matters, and, tapping his forehead, said:

“He does not understand them.”

If this remark had been repeated to his Majesty only harm could have ensued, but I told the Emperor that there was a vast official difference between the two Monarchs. King Edward acted, as he was obliged to act, namely, on the advice of his responsible Ministers, no

matter what his own personal opinions might be, and while a British Sovereign has the prerogative of dismissing his advisers, the right had not, I believed, been exercised since the reign of William IV. On the other hand, I pointed out, the Emperor was the real director of German policy, for his Government was responsible only to the Sovereign and not to the Reichstag, which had no power in the matter, so that the two positions could not be compared.

When the two rulers were together they always, I believe, got on very well, but when they were separated something usually happened to cause trouble between them, and the blame for this undoubtedly rests with the Emperor, who was impulsive, versatile, and a thorough believer in himself, altogether a complex character. The consequence was that he frequently gave the impression that he was running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, and sometimes he was.

The King received me on Derby Day, and I said I hoped my audience was a good augury for the success of his colt, Mead, like my Diamond Jubilee visit had been, but he did not think that his horse had any chance whatever. Sir James Miller's Rock Sand, ridden by that artist, the late Danny Maher, started a hot favourite and won.

His Majesty had been bothered a good deal about the choice of my successor at Berlin, and Count Gleichen, then in Egypt, was eventually selected, but was transferred to Washington not long afterwards. The King talked very freely about the Kaiser, and said :

"He must learn not to interfere in other people's business ; we exchange letters and telegrams occasionally, and of course I am quite civil to him."

On this particular occasion the King was very naturally angry with his nephew. The latter had told me he was hurt and disappointed because his uncle had visited Rome and Paris, and had appeared to have forgotten Berlin, when paying visits after his accession to the throne. This was, however, just one of those instances where the impulsiveness of the Kaiser led him astray ; he had, as we

know, formerly resented being "mothered" by his English relations, and when he became Emperor and King in 1888 he visited other Courts before coming to the one to which he was most nearly related. King Edward, therefore, had merely adopted the precedent set by his nephew several years previously, and in all the circumstances this was not surprising.

The King's anger was not, however, caused by the Kaiser's expression of disappointment, but was due to the fact that the latter—feeling, no doubt, greatly upset—had written a very flippant letter to his uncle about the King's complimentary visit to the President of the French Republic. Sovereigns, even if not related, are officially "cousins," and although the President was not a monarch, the Emperor had said something in bad taste about King Edward having discovered a new relative. The Kaiser was really doubly sore; his uncle showed no signs of visiting Berlin, nor could the Kaiser carry out his own long-cherished desire to visit Paris. Ill-timed jests are apt to cause a good deal of harm, and the King, tapping his forehead, said: "I sometimes think he is not right in his head."

When the term of my appointment at Berlin expired the seed which was to develop into the Triple Entente had fallen on fertile soil; I did not know this, but others cleverer than myself may have thought so; before the Russo-Japanese War broke out it seemed to me impossible that England, France, and Russia should unite; all kinds of factors were, however, paving the way for the new grouping of Powers. Germany had definitely embarked on the policy of building a great fleet, and she did not require a large one in order to cope with those of France and Russia; our Admiralty authorities, desirous of maintaining the Royal Navy in overwhelming strength, were obliged to obtain parliamentary sanction for this in a House of Commons where many members believed we were already sufficiently powerful on the ocean for any possible emergency.

There was also another disturbing factor. Some little time before I left Berlin a junior Minister had seemed to

suggest in Parliament that we should fall upon Germany unawares, and destroy all her ships. The Great General Staff had spoken to me about this, and declared the British Government had at last shown its hand clearly, and that nothing it might thereafter say could alter the fact. This time the subject was more serious than when the late General Sir Charles MacGregor compiled his *Defence of India* in connexion with the Russian bogey.

## CHAPTER XIX

It is now generally agreed, I believe, that William II was not guilty of the horrible charge, namely, that he had been for years insidiously working for a general war with the object of acquiring for Germany the hegemony of the Old World, and perhaps of the New as well. Unchallenged documentary evidence disproves the indictment, and in its absence I should have accepted the view of that unfortunate lady, the late Empress of Russia, who had known him all her life, and had told me that although she disliked and mistrusted him, she was "perfectly certain" that he had hoped to end his reign without a war; he was, she thought, overcome by the Crown Prince's party.

The Kaiser was eleven years old—a very impressionable age—when the Franco-German War broke out, and numbers of Germans were then living who remembered how their country had been torn to shreds, and ground into the dust, by Napoleon in the most cruel manner. I asked the Kaiser one day what the impression was in his home when the French declared war in 1870, and he told me there had been a strong feeling of anxiety lest the enemy should overrun the adjacent German territory before the German Army was concentrated. That gentle man, his father, had been, the Emperor told me, so impressed by the magnitude of the crisis that when he started for the front in the early morning he could not trust himself to say farewell to the Crown Princess Frederick, but left the task to his little boy.

The traditional French policy had been—and still is, if one may judge by facts—to prevent the unification of Germany, and every French Government appears to pursue this idea. I was in the Ruhr in September 1924, and was talking to a young railway porter while waiting



[Hamburg: T. H. Voigt

William  
Field Marshal  
1905.





for a train. On my mentioning that the French soldiers were not much in evidence, he replied that since the recent London Conference—when Mr. Ramsay MacDonald persuaded the French to agree to evacuate that territory—things had greatly improved. Before that event, he said, even the school children who came by train were always made to undo their packets of food on the open platform, rain or shine, on the pretext apparently that they might be carrying military contraband. I saw many of these children of the better class without shirts or other under-clothing, and the weather was wet and chilly. Their curriculum had been abridged; owing to long-continued lack of proper nourishment their condition, physical and mental, rendered them unfit for the ordinary one. The fuel supply was very inadequate; there was an ample quantity available, but the French would not permit its use.

In further conversation with the railway porter, he told me: "We don't want any more wars except one, and for that we are all ready to march to-night, 'to strangle' the French." Meanwhile, Germany is in the happy position of spending very little on armaments as compared with her neighbour, and so she has all the more money available for commercial and industrial pursuits, while every other European country is in financial distress.

There is, however, another side to the picture, which must be mentioned. Everybody sympathizes with the sufferings of the young, but this is an inevitable accompaniment of modern national war, and it was to be expected that the French should make the most of their opportunity. Few, except inhabitants of the vast regions occupied by the Germans, can possibly appreciate what those French citizens underwent; we were fortunately spared the horrors of invasion; if the Germans had made a successful landing here, perhaps our eyes would have been left to us to weep with, but not much more. If they are harsh among themselves, they would have been ruthless in England as they were in France. There does not seem to be any prospect, unfortunately, of the embers of strife between the latter country and Germany dying out; they are still glowing too fiercely.

The Kaiser's first thought had always been for the progress and development of his own empire, but his methods were sometimes aggravatingly interfering. As time went on, the Triple Entente had attained its full growth; we had done what the Emperor told me, on May 29, 1901, we should have to do, namely, join one side or the other. They all calculated in terms of armaments seconded by secret diplomacy, and the consequence was inevitable.

William II was inextricably involved in the diplomatic maze which caused the Great War, and, although he directed German policy, his Ministers sometimes pulled against him. It is desirable to quote a handful of incidents, chosen at random from hundreds, which throw light on the universal scheming which went on.

Count Benckendorff, the late Russian ambassador in London, wrote a long letter to Izvolsky, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in St. Petersburg, on January 28/February 10, 1909, in which he related a conversation with M. Paul Cambon, his French colleague. The French Government had been somewhat disagreeably surprised by Germany acknowledging that France held a privileged position in Morocco. The Entente's idea was that the German Government was endeavouring to improve its relations with France and England. Cambon told Benckendorff that the Foreign Secretary, Lord Grey of Falldon, welcomed the German concession for what it was worth in the interests of peace, but had said that after all it was only a piece of window-dressing. Cambon then went on to state, as mentioned in Chapter VIII, that the true cause why a real understanding between his country and Germany was impossible was too deeply rooted for any diplomatic documents to be able to remove it.

The Russian representative at Sofia was instructed, on June 25/July 8, 1911, to issue a statement to the Bulgarian Press declaring the rumours about a Bulgar-Russian military convention to be "apocryphal"; but this convention had been signed nine years previously, in 1902, and was still in force. These were the people with whom we were acting secretly in close concert; our

honestly-intentioned statesmen were being deceived all round.

When the Agadir crisis was settled in the autumn of 1911, the Russian ambassador in Berlin reported, on September 30/October 18, that the peaceful outcome was due "first of all" to the German Emperor who had, he said, resolved from the outset "not to allow the crisis to result in war." By that time the military experts in London had gradually acquired immense influence, and believed that with France and Russia as allies we could easily defeat Germany.

M. Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, in a Memorandum dated January 10-23, 1912, told his ambassador in London bluntly and, of course, under the seal of secrecy, that Russian "political interests are directly opposed to the maintenance of Chinese territorial integrity." He added, it is true, that the time was not ripe for the execution of his marauding schemes; it scarcely could be, for the British Government held, and believed Sazonov to hold, quite a different view, and the Entente would have been endangered if the English Cabinet had known the real intentions of the Russian Government.

We should not, however, be surprised to learn that the London Foreign Office, which was acting honestly according to its lights and was frank with its friends, was frequently being kept in the dark by foreign schemers. The Russian ambassador in Paris reported to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in St. Petersburg, in his telegram No. 351 of October 27/November 9, 1912, that the Foreign Minister of the Republic, M. Poincaré, complained that his Government was ignorant of the terms of the Russo-Italian agreement concluded at Racconigi in 1909, whereupon the ambassador retorted that the Franco-Italian treaty of 1902 had not been communicated to the Russian Government; France and Russia had been close allies for years prior to the latter date!

It does seem extraordinary that a petty and not highly civilized State like Serbia was in 1914 should have been in a position to cause a crisis which resulted in a World War with all its incalculable consequences; but Europe had

become one huge inverted cone propped up by guns and secret diplomacy ; only the slightest push was required in order to dash it to the ground and explode the charge. The same thing will, of course, happen again if the same methods be pursued. A perusal of oriental newspapers, Japanese and others, showed the delight of the Far Eastern nations at what they termed the Suicide of the West ; a second Great War would be even more horrible than the first one, and might easily complete the process, so that it is really just as well, for humanity's sake, that the United States should keep tight hold of the purse strings ; this is at present Europe's only chance.

Could William II have prevented the explosion at the moment, in 1914 ? No doubt he could have done so, even after Austria had issued her ultimatum, for she would never have ventured to face Russia without Germany's support. If it had been known to the world that England intended to back France and Russia in the event of their war with Germany, then it is, I believe, certain that Austria would never have delivered her ultimatum ; the German Government would have told her to expect no aid from it, the Crown Prince's party would have been overcome, and peace have been maintained for a short time longer, when some other incident would have set the spark to the powder. The Crown Prince's party, however, was, as the Empress of Russia told me, convinced that England never intended to fight, and her judgment has since been confirmed by other sources.

Similarly, if in the actual circumstances the Kaiser had refused to support Austria there would have been also a brief respite ; a dozen years previously I had reported from Berlin that the time could not be far distant when the cataclysm must overwhelm Europe, and the capital levy in Germany, in 1913, showed that the moment was rapidly approaching, for a second impost of this nature must have been out of the question. Meanwhile, the situation was weighing like a nightmare upon everybody.

There was also another possibility. If Germany had refused to support her ally, the latter might well have made overtures, which would, we may be very sure, have been

greedily accepted, to the other camp. This would have left Germany completely isolated, for it is known that she already possessed ample information that Italy was quite unreliable in spite of her treaty engagements.

The late General Sir Frederick Maurice, father of the present distinguished soldier, was the most eminent military writer of his day, and he published, many years ago, a most interesting work on hostilities which had preceded a declaration of war. It contains a surprising number of instances of the kind, and was well known to the Great General Staff in Berlin. An isolated Germany might have done the same thing, and a fortnight's start would have made all the difference to her, for the Entente's mobilization would not even have been commenced before the German hordes were well on their way to Paris; her mobilization took hours where the others required days or weeks. If she had been scheming for war, why did she not adopt the plan, quoted by Maurice, before 1914, that is to say when the preparations of the Entente Powers were not so far advanced?

There is not very much in the argument that the German military party was scheming for war, for this was the goal at which every other similar body in the two great camps was aiming at, whether their calculations were justified by events or not.

It would, of course, have been most reprehensible on Germany's part to have attacked the other side unawares, and so was her violation of Belgian territory, which I had reported as certain a few years previously; but one should hear both parties to a dispute even when they differ. The practically universal German argument is that for several years prior to 1914 there was no upright political conduct on the part of the Entente. The Government at Berlin was somehow or other informed from time to time of what passed between the Entente Governments, and their confidences are now common knowledge.

On August 8-16, 1911, the Russian ambassador in London reported to St. Petersburg that the British Foreign Secretary had said to him that, in the event of war between Germany and France, England must take part in it.

Violation of Belgium was not at that time contemplated by our statesmen, and our commitments were denied over and over again in Parliament. On June 10, 1914, Sir Edward Grey said, according to Benckendorff, that somebody had committed a dreadful indiscretion by announcing the fact of a recently concluded Anglo-Russian naval convention, and at a highly inconvenient moment, because the Foreign Secretary had to answer a question on the subject in the House of Commons. His reply was admittedly a misleading one (*Twenty-five Years*, vol. i., p. 289) so as to keep the country—with undoubtedly the best intentions—in the dark. What is still more startling is Benckendorff's telegram of June 12–25, 1914. This reports Sir Edward as having told the German ambassador, in answer to his query about the convention, that while there was, between England on the one side, and France and Russia on the other, neither alliance nor convention, the relations between the three Governments had become so intimate as to have all the force of an alliance ; we were told exactly the contrary.

As regards the naval convention the Russian Press was instructed to give a categorical denial to the report, but it seems that the Berlin Government had learnt the news from an unimpeachable source, and caused its publication in the German Press.

No sane person would suggest that Sir Edward Grey, or any other British statesman, wanted war ; the mere idea is ridiculous, but foreign diplomatists had got us bound in toils from which honourable escape was hopeless. In the last page of *Secret and Confidential* the view was put forward that, if we had to fight Germany—a contingency which did not seem improbable during one period of my military attachéship there—our chances would have been brighter if we had relied on ourselves alone ; as things turned out, the United States intervened in the very nick of time to save the allied cause.<sup>1</sup>

When Germany was at last crushed, fortunately for all of us, the Allies were even then not frank. While the peace treaty was being negotiated any ordinary person would

<sup>1</sup> See *Secret and Confidential*, pp. 361, 362.

have assumed that the Chief of that mighty Republic, the United States, should have been informed then, if not sooner, of the various agreements which had been concluded between the Allies during the war. President Wilson, however, informed Congress afterwards that he had been kept in the dark concerning these vital matters. This fact speaks for itself.

German diplomacy was just as tortuous as that of the opposite camp; any number of instances in support of this statement can be found in the documents published since the war, and one of them may be quoted as being typical of the others. Count Pourtalès, the Kaiser's ambassador at St. Petersburg, reported on April 2, 1910, to the Chancellor that "for us (Germany) an understanding with Russia is not desirable, as we must retain a free hand with respect to her." But protestations of quite a different nature were constantly being uttered. The fact is that the entire system everywhere was, and is still, certain to provoke war instead of preventing it. The conditions, as they existed for some years prior to 1914, may be likened to a highly sensitive fuze which the slightest jar will set in action to explode the magazine.

I do not think that the Kaiser was more guilty of provoking the upheaval than were many statesmen of the Entente. After allowing for his aggravating impulsiveness, and German official and Press arrogance, which frequently alarmed foreign Governments, nobody has suggested, I believe, that he caused the murders of Serajevo which ignited the charge. Any observer could see, before the event, that the crash must occur soon, and plenty of documentary evidence now confirms this view.

The confession of guilt, extorted at Versailles, cannot be relied upon, for the alternative was starvation. The Germans declare that the Allies violated every one of the Armistice conditions formulated by the United States; they were promised, it is said, easy terms if the dynasty should be deposed. The Germans were truly fortunate when the great Western Republic acted as it did, for they realized that their armies must have been utterly smashed if the war had continued after the Americans were ready.



My view is that in November 1918, the German nation had had enough of war, and was willing to live in amity with its neighbours for the future, whereas military occupation cannot possibly last for ever, and must give rise to the most revengeful feelings, besides which the constant repetition of the charge by some statesmen that the entire guilt for the tragedy of 1914 rests on Germany naturally evokes occasional sharp rejoinders from her.

In 1914 the English and the German Governments were, I believe, the only two which really wanted peace, but the tools employed by everybody had fashioned a monstrous machine which started automatically, and puny human beings were powerless to stop it, so it overwhelmed with its catastrophic plunge scores of millions of peaceable persons, who had been lashed into fury by the two instruments, guns and diplomacy, the former being the foundation of the latter. Surveying the results of their handiwork, well-meaning statesmen may perhaps reflect that Hell is said to be paved with good intentions. It is quite probable that the explosion of 1914 might have been postponed if mobilization had not been ordered. Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, thought, however, that the moment had come for the execution of his projects, and duped the Emperor Nicholas into sanctioning it, when Germany had no choice but to follow suit; being better prepared, she was the first to be ready and therefore launched the attack.

The downfall of three mighty empires was one result of the revolt of scores of millions of common people against a system which had made them pawns for a handful of highly placed men—of whom ours were certainly well-intentioned—to play with, their lives and property being the stakes. With such a system the only possible manner by which peace could have been rendered secure was, it seems to me, an Anglo-German alliance; no other Power could then have stirred either in Europe, or overseas, where we possessed practically all the coaling stations. Uncontrollable, although unseen, forces were, however, driving the world in another direction.

There is a sharp conflict of opinion in Germany, among

the very numerous adherents of a monarchy, concerning the Kaiser's conduct at the time of his abdication in November 1918, and I may summarize what I learnt from German sources, monarchist and republican. One section of the former holds that he should have headed a charge and died gloriously, as this would have thrown a halo round his memory and strengthened the hold of his family on his subjects. Those in favour of the Emperor's leading a forlorn hope consider that his flight into Holland rendered him a "deserter" (*Fahnenflüchtiger*) and they are shocked in consequence.

The reply to this monarchist argument is that he could not ensure death; he might have been taken prisoner, and, as the assumed arch-criminal, have been exposed to all kinds of indignities which might have led to civil war.

Many of his admirers—possibly all of them—maintain on the other hand that the Kaiser acted in the best interests of his country; they believe that whether he were killed in action or captured he would have become a martyr, and that civil war would then have undoubtedly ensued. The Republicans informed the Emperor at the time that they shared this opinion; they declared that the monarchy was to be permanently abolished, because the Allies had promised to fulfil the Fourteen Points, and then, say the Germans, they violated every one of them. The easiest of terms had been pledged, they said, provided the dynasty should be set aside, and any dramatic action on the Kaiser's part must rend Germany asunder. I think he chose the wisest course for her, and von Hindenburg advised him to adopt it.

A real constitutional monarchy in Germany, where the Government would be responsible to Parliament and not, as formerly, to the Sovereign, does not seem to be a wild dream, for her citizens are law-abiding, and a hereditary Chief of State obviates the ceaseless scheming for office which must ever exist under a republican form of government. If a German royal family should become decadent, then a new one could be installed, as was the case when Napoleon's marshal, Bernadotte, was elected to the crown of Sweden with very happy results for his new country.

It was hinted in Chapter VI that the Crown Princess's eldest son appears to possess the qualifications desirable in a constitutional monarch; I am, however, informed by those who ought to know that the monarchists, or most of them, would prefer things to go on as they are now doing for some time to come.

The multitude of angry passions now seething beneath the surface in Europe render the situation far more complex than before 1914; it was then very simple, for ceaseless additions to and improvements in armaments could produce only one result. To-day, absence of funds alone has prevented further great adventures, but science and the chemist between them may in time evolve some certain method of destruction procurable at a nominal cost. The only prophecy, therefore, which it seems safe to make is that Coercion will fail in the future as it has failed in the past. Shall it be replaced by Chaos or by Commonsense?

## **ACT II**



## CHAPTER XX

I AM now going to take the reader from Europe to the Far East, where he shall be asked to digest less of high politics, and have some lighter fare placed before him. My duties as G.O.C. in North China caused me to have frequent dealings with the Chinese authorities relating to some of their citizens. I have certainly had extraordinarily good fortune in holding appointments which were always very interesting and occasionally quite exciting ; it is a continual pleasure to me to reflect on all that I have seen, on everything that I ought to have learnt even if my experiences have from time to time misled me, and on the innumerable kindnesses shown to me.

The gap between the expiration of my military attaché-ship at Berlin in 1903 and the beginning of my term of command in China in 1906 was filled up by my post as War Office representative with the Russian army in Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. This experience has, however, been described in *Secret and Confidential*, so need not be further alluded to.

Peace between Russia and Japan had been concluded nearly a year when the War Office asked me whether the appointment of general officer commanding the British troops of occupation in North China would be agreeable to me. This was the appointment which attracted me more than any other possible one, for several foreign nations maintained forces there after the suppression of the Boxer rising of 1900. Hitherto my official relations with other countries had been those of a military attaché at the two great military courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin, and the opportunity of meeting foreign soldiers in an international garrison was very alluring. I lost no

time in accepting the offer, and being fond of a sea voyage, I sailed from London for Shanghai in August 1906, in the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer, *Mon-golia*.

She was carrying the Australian mail, which involved changing at Colombo to another vessel, the *Delhi*, but soon after leaving London the discomfort of my ship promised to be considerable. The company was obliged, by the terms of its contract, to carry officers at a reduced rate, and my former experience of it had been that they were usually allotted the worst cabins even when there were plenty of good ones vacant. On this occasion my cabin was shown to me on embarkation, and although it was on a lower deck its size was ample, besides which my rank entitled me to a cabin to myself.

Very early in the morning after our departure from Tilbury a loud and continuous noise awakened me, and the same thing happened on the next day. Inquiry showed that the P. & O. authorities had carefully selected almost the most unpleasant situation in the ship, for I was located underneath some store where a large number of casks had to be opened every morning in the early hours.

As there were several empty cabins available, while fewer passengers were to embark than should disembark at Marseilles, I asked whether a change for the better could not be effected, and was told this was impossible. But I bluffed successfully by intimating that unless a promenade deck cabin on the cool, or port, side of the steamer for the Red Sea were given to me at Marseilles, I would leave the old-fashioned company for the progressive North German Lloyd by going thence to Genoa, and give the latter, an old friend, a good advertisement. The German ships were at that time much more comfortable and economical than the British mail line, and had the advantage of a first-class laundry, which the P. & O. considered to be too much of a luxury. My sham ultimatum resulted in my getting one of the best cabins in the steamer. My threat had to be pure bluff, because if carried it out I would, of course, have been

obliged to travel at my own expense, which I had no intention of doing.

The voyage to Colombo was very pleasant, the captain, Preston, being admirable in every respect, like all the other P. & O. commanders with whom I have sailed. The *Delhi* was smaller than the *Mongolia*, but huge compared with steamers of my young days. She was eventually wrecked when conveying the Princess Royal and the Duke of Fife to Egypt, when the Duke died from the results of exposure. When I was in her, in 1906, her captain's name was Andrews, and I have something to say about him.

A couple of days before we were due to arrive at Hong-Kong, I had borrowed the *Sailing Directions for the China Seas*, and discovered that the current month, September, was the worst in the typhoon season. Captain (now Vice-Admiral Sir Rudolph) Bentinck was a fellow-passenger with me from England, on his way to take over the command of a cruiser. We were on deck shortly before breakfast, a dozen miles or so from Hong-Kong Harbour. Some lascars were taking down the awnings, which seemed surprising as the weather was very fine, and no sea was running. Like me, Captain Bentinck wondered what the reason was, for it was sure to be hot very soon. Just as the last awning was being taken in a sudden and violent gust of wind got underneath it, and a lascar on its outside was thrown into the air and fell into one of the boats. The awning was secured at the very moment that the storm burst.

At 8.30 a.m. the barometer began to fall, and in less than thirty minutes it had dropped more than half an inch; the needle on the barograph went down almost vertically, so that the ink spluttered on its chart. Just before the typhoon was on us, Captain Andrews sighted a lighthouse outside the harbour, and set a westerly course, as he knew the wind would drift such a huge ship to the east, and she was literally surrounded by rocky islands. This manœuvre of Andrews's enabled him to make the very spot where he wished to anchor, and as the *Delhi* had very powerful twin-screw engines,



he was able to remain there. We were then about seven miles from the harbour, and the mist became so thick that one could not see much farther than the length of the steamer, while a number of unwieldy Chinese junks lay at anchor, having been unable to get home in time.

At noon the wind abated slightly and the glass began to rise, the storm then working northwards, so that we got into harbour at one o'clock, instead of at half-past nine as had been anticipated. Hong-Kong Harbour was an extraordinary sight; Bentinck and I counted over a dozen steamers which had been sunk, or driven ashore and smashed. The new Post Office buildings and a big, strongly built, store had been blown down; the *Mont-eagle*, a large passenger steamer, had been driven ashore, the P. & O. company had lost seven out of eight large lighters, while the navy had lost eleven out of thirteen; a French torpedo-boat destroyer was driven ashore and broken to bits, and had five men killed; her captain told me afterwards that he thought he would never venture to go to sea again. A beautiful American sailing ship, the *Sarah Hitchcock*, of 1,500 tons, was driven ashore, badly damaged, and lay fifty yards up on the beach; her commander was part owner, and remained, I was told later, at Hong-Kong, where he took up pilot work. Sir Matthew Nathan, the Governor, told me that thousands of registered Chinese junks, with their families on board, were destroyed, and the Bishop of South China was, I believe, drowned. The revolving storm had struck the harbour from an unusual but also from the worst possible quarter, west or south-west.

The typhoon lasted only for a couple of hours, but late on the following afternoon wreckage was still rushing past us; the current in Hong-Kong harbour is terrific. Hundreds of unfortunate Chinese men, women, and children, had been swept to destruction past the quays, for no attempt could be made to try to save them. The Governor told me that the loss of life at Hong-Kong alone must have been at least 4,000. When the typhoon had circled away the Chinese brought out little carved idols and carried them down to the water's edge to show them

the damage which they should have averted ; then they smacked them well, and left them out all night as a punishment.

This typhoon of September 18 was the worst which had occurred since the year 1878 ; our chief steward put its cause down to the presence of some Portuguese missionaries who were on board, but Andrews declared it must have come out of spite, because I had been reading the sailing directions. Bentinck asked him why he had ordered the deck awnings to be taken in before the barometer began to fall, and he said that soon after five o'clock on the morning of the storm he had come on deck, and noticed that the sunrise was "hard," and the swell of the sea "short" ; this had made him think there was a disturbance somewhere a good distance away, but he thought it wise to take precautions, although both the barometer and barograph were very steady and high.

On entering Hong-Kong Harbour, Bentinck and I had seen only the mastheads and tops of the funnels of quite large sunken steamers, but many more smaller vessels had gone to the bottom, making a total of thirty steamships which were known to have foundered in harbour in a couple of hours. It was a terrible loss of life.

Andrews wished to get clear of the harbour as soon as possible, lest another storm should burst and drive other vessels into his ship. But he required coal, and none could be had for many hours, as the coal lighters had nearly all been destroyed. At 9 p.m. on the day after the first typhoon, Andrews noticed that the barometer was falling again ; it had already been "pumping" (going up and down) as is usual when a disturbance is coming, but coaling could not be finished until midnight. By that time the wind was freshening rapidly and there were occasional blinding rain squalls.

Our captain realized that it was too dangerous to attempt to go to sea then amid all the sunken wrecks, so he decided to shift his position, and try to get his ship round a promontory off Kowloon where the hills would afford some shelter. He therefore slipped his moorings at 12.10 a.m. on September 20, but had to move very slowly, for if he

had gone fast for steering purposes he would have run into something. The *Delhi* was, of course, extraordinarily difficult to manage with the engines going slow, for she was a high ship, her upper bridge being fifty feet above the water, with the wind blowing harder every minute, but Andrews succeeded somehow. Bentinck said it was a most remarkable piece of seamanship and nerve. When we began to get under way, the Commodore thought the ship had broken loose, and he signalled to his ships to lay out more anchors.

There was a meteorological observatory at Hong-Kong, and the local Press blamed it severely for not having given warning of the first typhoon on September 18, but, as Andrews said, this was very unjust criticism, because the barometer had given no warning until the storm actually burst. There was also an excellent Jesuit observatory at Manila, but for some foolish reason the official one at Hong-Kong was not in the habit of communicating sufficiently often with it; otherwise notice could have been given. No doubt it was then very difficult to make more or less exact forecasts; the Hong-Kong observatory calculated, about half a dozen hours before it broke over the harbour, that the second typhoon was three hundred miles distant, but Andrews wisely paid no attention to this, for the storm was much nearer than was estimated, and made all his preparations to shift his station as soon as the last load of coal should be on board. During coaling I noticed some Chinese women in a lighter writing letters which they then burnt; this was done in order to send messages to the spirits of the departed.

This second typhoon lasted very much longer than the first one; it blew all through the night with undiminished fury, and showed no signs of abating at noon on the following day, and a large steamer had sunk close behind us during the night. Andrews thereupon resolved to get to sea, but it was some time before he could get his anchors up, for the ship had been swinging in so many different directions that one anchor had fouled the cable of the other; but nothing was lost.

Bentinck and I thought we would write to the head

offices of the P. & O. company in London to express our admiration of Captain Andrews's extraordinary skill and judgment. A very courteous and appreciative letter was sent to me in acknowledgment of mine, but I did not meet Bentinck again until twenty years afterwards, when I asked him what the company had said to him. He told me that the answer which he had received rather belittled the whole affair, and implied that P. & O. commanders were always expected to be equal to any emergency, and to think nothing of it. No doubt they are, and in other lines as well, but Andrews's performance was an extraordinarily fine one; the slightest miscalculation, and the poor *Delhi* would have gone to her doom years earlier than was actually the case.

The remainder of the passage to Shanghai was uneventful, and I landed there to await passage to Tientsin. The first thing that strikes one about the International Settlement is its general magnificence, and as the British have had the principal share in creating that great centre, its appearance must arouse a strong feeling of very proper pride in an Englishman's breast. My stay was to be most agreeable, for the English Club Committee had honoured me by inviting me to reside there as being "a person of distinction"!

A custom at this premier Treaty Port of China soon attracted my attention; large business transactions were often carried out not in a firm's offices, but at the club, and the practice at Tientsin was the same. The system must have had its advantages, or it would not have been adopted, but its influence on juniors was not, I think, a good one, for it led to drinking—I do not suggest to excess—much too early in the day. Generally speaking the standard of living among the junior subordinates of a firm was very much higher than would have been the case in England. Living in North China in my time was extraordinarily cheap; a youngster, fresh from home, might start on £300 a year, with a rise of fifty pounds after twelve months, and another similar increase after two years' service. Instead of being able to set up for themselves in business after a brief period, these young-

sters seldom had a spare cent. The Germans, on the other hand, were thrifty, saved money, and learnt Chinese, so that they could and did go ahead; they had also another great advantage, for the principal German banks subsidize commercial undertakings to an extent unknown with us.

Hospitality at Shanghai among the British community was unbounded, and on a truly magnificent scale, reminding me of Russia in the old days; everybody entertained everybody else, and the great firm of Jardine, Matheson, and Company literally kept open house; I was told that at one time its annual expenditure under this head amounted to about £50,000, which gives some idea of the profits that used to be made in the China trade. Mr. Henry Keswick, then head of the firm in Shanghai, was more than kind to me, although we had never previously met, and so was the judge of the High Court, Sir H. de Sausmarez, whose brother (now a brigadier-general), had once been a subaltern of mine in India, and thoroughly deserved to get on in his profession; he was a capital officer.

After spending five days at Shanghai waiting for a steamer, I left that port for Tientsin on September 28 in a small coasting vessel which demonstrated her sea-going qualities in a violent gale.

## CHAPTER XXI

My arrival at Tientsin was expected, and the ceremony of landing was carried out with due formality: Guard of Honour with band, and the senior officers, who were stationed at Tientsin, being present. This had been arranged by Colonel (now General Sir H.) Bower, an officer in the Indian cavalry, who had already earned distinction during the Boxer rising; the commander of my steamer, Cowan, had anchored overnight in the Pei-ho River so as to allow of my arriving in the forenoon.

My predecessors in the command had always occupied the same furnished residence, which was one of the best in the British Concession, and belonged to a Russian trader, Mr. Batouyev. Our occupation of Chinese territory, although of indefinite duration—it depended on the payment of the Boxer indemnity instalments—was bound to come to an end some time, so this was the most convenient arrangement.

After the landing formalities had been completed, Bower drove me off to my new home. It may be mentioned that the commander of each other foreign contingent was supplied by his Government with a carriage, but the War Office left the British general to do what he could for himself. Mindful of my foreign experiences, I wasted no time before calling on the foreign commanders; the French general, Lefèvre, was the senior of them, having been five years in China, which suited him; he was, like his successors in my time, a very pleasant man. The Japanese commander was the only other general, the remaining contingents being much smaller in numbers and in charge of field officers.

My own staff was, I soon found, first-rate, its principal member being Major Daniell, who was killed at a very

early stage of the Great War when serving with his regiment, the Royal Irish. My force was the strongest of all the occupying troops, and was composed partly of British and partly of Indian units, the supply and other services being found by India, while the combatant portion was less than 8,000 of all ranks, the French, with about half that number, coming next, Japan third, and small German and Italian detachments. The Americans had abandoned their Concession and withdrawn their troops.

As our military occupation of Tientsin was bound to come to an end some day, the arrangements for storing ammunition and supplies were naturally of a makeshift character, but a curious instance of carelessness may be related in connexion with our main powder magazine, which was a large one. The regulations for a permanent store of this nature are very strict, and explosives are kept in isolated places, every precaution being taken to prevent a magazine from being blown up. When I was a youngster there was a very stern officer who was Inspector-General of Artillery in England. He was inspecting the magazines at Purfleet marshes one day, and was in the bowels of the earth with the Master Gunner, the official in charge. Suddenly he asked the latter—both of them had felt shoes on in place of boots—whether he could give him a match; the Master Gunner, whose nerves had been blunted by constant association with dangerous things, thoughtlessly produced a box, whereupon the Inspector-General immediately placed him in arrest for having it on his person, and the unfortunate man was tried and broken.

In Tientsin our powder magazine was in the heart of a mass of inflammable wooden buildings containing merchandise, and an explosion must have caused immense damage and burnt down much of the Concession, but nobody had ever thought of setting up a lightning-conductor; if anybody wishes to know what a thunderstorm is like he should visit North China at the proper season. Some time elapsed before the War Office sanctioned the trifling expenditure necessary, but the precaution seemed a reasonable one to take.

The more I saw of my new surroundings the more they pleased me; we were completely self-contained, even having our own field post offices with Indian stamps which had the letters C.E.F. on them (Chinese Expeditionary Force); some of them are valuable for that voracious sect, the philatelists.

I often used to read, when I was a very small boy, a book about the Great Wall of China, little dreaming that it should ever be my lot to see it; but an Indian regiment, the 41st Dogras, was stationed at Shan-Hai-Kuan, where this interesting relic joins the ocean, and I went thither to inspect it.

The town itself is in direct railway communication with Tientsin and Peking on one side, and with Mukden on the other, the line forming the Imperial Railways of North China; it was then under the very able management of Mr. Foley. During the tenure of his command the British general had a most comfortable saloon car fitted with arm-chairs, beds, servants' accommodation, and kitchen, so that he could travel quite independently of any dwellings. That portion of the Great Wall which abuts on the sea is far less interesting, from an antiquarian point of view, than that which is nearer to Peking, but much damage had been done in the Shan-Hai-Kuan area by troops having pulled out portions as mementoes. When I was in North China I was one of the founders of a society for the protection of ancient monuments, but circumstances were unfortunately too strong for us.

A peculiarity about the Treaty Ports of China was the foreign Concessions. These ports had been thrown open to foreign trade, usually after forcible intervention on the part of the Westerner, and it had been arranged that foreigners should reside and do business in them. A Concession might be, as at Shanghai, international for Occidentals, or else each Power could have its own territory, which was the case at Tientsin, where they all adjoined one another, the boundaries being arbitrary lines, so that one passed freely from one to the others.

The British Concession at Tientsin, which was the second largest Treaty Port in China, was by far the most



important, and was a model of perfect democracy. The Consul-General was the principal official and was invested with very large powers over British subjects, and there was a Municipality which had its own Chinese police, and managed everything remarkably well. The private residences and the houses of business were sufficiently imposing, and their owners, the merchant princes, were not only very kind but very interesting as well, and my acquaintance with them is a most pleasant memory.

Several of them were very wealthy men who had risen by their own exertions from the bottom rung of life's ladder; they were most generously inclined, and never refused a charitable appeal. I admired them immensely when I got to know them, but at first this was not very easy. One of my predecessors had ruffled them, and this was not surprising; he had a contempt for all civilians, and after they had called on the great man's wife, she and her husband merely sent cards by their servant in return, so that at one time there had been a gulf which separated the soldiers and the merchant princes; after all, the G.O.C. was not a Viceroy.

Mr. Hopkins was the British Consul-General at Tientsin, and his niece kept house for him; they were both delightful friends, and he was a first-rate Chinese scholar. I was not going to attempt to acquire even a smattering of the language; the period of my appointment was for four years, and I was told that it requires at least seven to become even fairly proficient. Sir John Jordan, who had just been promoted from the Chinese Consular Service to be his Majesty's Minister at Peking, had, I believe, no superior among foreign Chinese scholars, but he usually if not invariably interviewed the Chinese authorities through the intermediary of his British interpreter, although he had been one himself.

There are, I believe, so many different shades of intonation in the language that an expression pitched on one note may, I understand, be quite polite, whereas if a different sound be given to it, even though quite unintentionally, the sense may be most offensive, so caution is necessary; there are numerous dialects, but there was

then only one written tongue, namely Mandarin, for everybody. When our northern servants were on board H.M.S. *Alacrity*, where the admiral's domestics were Cantonese, they had to converse in English, but nowadays Young China is bringing the colloquial language more and more into use for printed works and translations.

The Chinese are a highly ceremonious and a very dramatic people; they have three hundred rules of ceremony, and three thousand for demeanour; they do not invariably adhere to them, but a foreigner is expected to accomplish this impossible task; even one's servants had their visiting cards, several inches in length and width. Mr. Hopkins told me, immediately after my arrival, that I must get some of these cards, for besides the Governor-General of the Metropolitan Province of Chih-li there were several Mandarins with whom I should have relations; we employed large numbers of Chinese in the supply, and other, departments, and they lived in the Chinese city, which contained something like a million inhabitants.

Mr. Hopkins kindly undertook the task of finding a suitable transliteration of my surname; he selected three characters which, expressed in English, mean: "Hua of the Virtuous Thought!" He explained that, while I assumed high military command, my Chinese name would diffuse a sense of benign security.

As my troops were in occupation of foreign territory, my relations with the British and Chinese authorities were peculiar. According to the Army Annual Act, which is, of course, Statute Law, everybody, male or female, connected with the force was subject to British civil and criminal law administered by the General Officer Commanding, who convened Courts Martial if in his discretion he considered this to be desirable. His Court Martial warrant from the Sovereign was of much wider latitude than in the case of a commander within the Empire, for he was empowered to confirm sentences of death, and to carry out civil proceedings; in fact, he was a kind of combined Lord High Chancellor, Archbishop, and soldier.

The Chinese authorities very naturally disliked their own subjects in our employ being not liable to their own

laws, including the ministrations of the official torturer, and an incident had occurred just at the time of my arrival in Tientsin. One of our coolies was said to have committed some offence in the native city, had been arrested, beaten, and imprisoned, by the Chinese magistrate. It was of great importance to be on the most cordial terms possible with the Governor-General and his departmental staffs, but this was evidently the thin end of the wedge. Through some misunderstanding the matter had been referred before my arrival to the *Chargé d'Affaires* at Peking for his interpretation of the agreement concerning Chinese in British military employment; the language was perfectly clear—to say nothing about the Army Act—but the locum tenens was nervous and read it differently to anybody else, no doubt thinking this was the easiest solution.

I was sure the Chinese were bluffing, so I told the Governor-General that the coolie must be released and handed over at once, or else I would be obliged to send troops to take both the latter and the magistrate. He was liberated immediately with an apology, there was never any other case of the kind, the Governor-General said the magistrate had made an unwarrantable mistake, and our relations were always most cordial. I need scarcely add that I had not the slightest intention of imperilling a few troops in a great native city for the sake of a trifle, but I was convinced that the Chinese authorities would have got into trouble at Peking if they had persisted in causing much ado about nothing, so was sure they would act gracefully and sensibly in the matter.

When I had been about a week at Tientsin I received a letter from Mr. Henry Keswick, who was also Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council, which controlled the large body of Sikh police in the International Settlement.

It appeared that trouble had been smouldering for some time previously, and the Council were faced with the difficulty that there was no European officer with the police who was conversant with their language, for the new superintendent would not arrive for some months. Mr. Keswick asked me therefore whether I could send an officer to Shanghai to investigate the situation, which was a very

serious one. It was believed that the men might have some legitimate grievances, and the Council were anxious to get at the root of the matter. Besides the danger of having a more or less mutinous body of police, the rice crop had failed, and demonstrations on the part of the Chinese were considered to be not improbable. The Council wished me to send a properly qualified British officer for one month, and a native officer for six months, and the pecuniary attractions were very considerable.

My duties had nothing whatever to do with Shanghai, whose volunteer corps was inspected yearly by the general from Hong-Kong, and a matter of this description really fell within the British Minister's sphere at Peking. His residence and mine were in two cities, so that there should be no clashing of public interests. As Mr. Keswick's request was an urgent one I decided to comply with it immediately, and report my action later. Fortunately there was a Sikh regiment at Tientsin, the 47th, which rendered magnificent service during the Great War; its colonel selected two excellent officers to go to Shanghai, and they set out as soon as possible. He told me that Sikhs are "human lions, but desperate intriguers."

The British officer, Major Hall, and his Indian subordinate performed their task so admirably, and succeeded so quickly in getting matters on a footing satisfactory to all concerned that the Municipal Council were most anxious for them to remain permanently, but both preferred to return ultimately to their regiment. I rather expected a nasty jar from the authorities for my action, and was agreeably surprised to receive in course of time a letter of thanks from London wherein the Foreign Office and the War Office expressed their satisfaction with my promptitude.

In the middle of October I paid my first visit to Peking, where I was on that and on many subsequent occasions the guest of the Minister, the late Sir John Jordan, and Lady Jordan. Their great kindness and help are treasured memories, and they had a charming daughter who married Major (now General Sir Travers) Clarke, whose services during the Great War are well known to everybody. The

British Legation, formerly the property of a Manchu Prince, was a very comfortable dwelling, modernized to some extent to meet European requirements; I passed many happy days there, and now unfortunately Lady Jordan and Lady Clarke are no longer with us.

My principal reason for visiting the Chinese capital was to inspect the Legation Guard. When the situation had become serious in 1900 a few men were sent thither in hot haste by some of the Powers, our own included, and when everything had become quiet again, after the relief of the Legations, a small force was detailed by most Governments for permanent duty in order to protect them. The Legation Quarter was separate from the Chinese city, and one side of the British compound was only a few yards from the Forbidden City.

Our Legation Guard was quartered in the compound so as to be always ready at hand, and was about three hundred strong, including some artillerymen, together with a few field-guns. The duty was a very pleasant change from the dull routine of colonial service, and some of the surrounding country is very picturesque, while it affords capital shooting. The presence of this tiny body of troops, isolated in the midst of an immense and often turbulent city, had, Sir John Jordan told me, a wonderfully calming effect on malcontents. Peking was surrounded by a huge and very massive wall, and in pre-Boxer days a foreigner, if he should be taking a walk close to it, was likely to have great, big, stones dropped on him by old Chinese gentlemen seated on the parapet, many yards above his head; this used to be indeed a favourite recreation, but the presence of a few bayonets had produced a most satisfactory amendment.

I was very sorry to find at Peking that some of the diplomatists were not inclined to be helpful. Sir John Jordan is excluded from this criticism; he had been brought into the diplomatic service to a post of great responsibility from the Chinese Consular Service, and was always most anxious to do all in his power for the general welfare. The drawback about Peking for the troops was that the surroundings were not very healthy, and as late

as the middle of October there were a number of men on the sick list.

The hospital accommodation was inadequate, and several new cases were perforce housed in tents, and the nights were already cold. Consequently it became urgently necessary to put these men in a building, pending the erection of additional hospital accommodation. The only feasible method was to place the new cases in the officers' mess, and transfer this to the house of one of the officers of the Legation Guard, which was already occupied by a married officer and his wife. They, in their turn, would then have to go outside the Legation Quarter into an hotel, and thus be separated from the troops, which would be highly undesirable, unless they should be permitted temporarily to occupy an empty house belonging to the Legation.

One of Jordan's staff told me that the diplomatists objected strongly to this plan, as they did not wish to have any officer on their side of the compound, and the statement was confirmed by another rising secretary. One or two of the objectors may have been a little jealous of the social rank of the officer and his wife, who were most pleasant in every way, and a decided acquisition to the society of the place, or the old feeling of dislike for the soldier when his official services are not required may have existed; if they are requisitioned, then, as Kipling says, in one of his famous *Barrack Room Ballads* :

"It's 'thin red line of 'eroes' when the drums begin to roll."

The Minister was most desirous that the proposed arrangement should be carried out, but he was obliged for some reason to obtain the consent of the malcontents, for unlike a commanding officer he had not the power, it appeared, to issue his own instructions whether they were palatable or not. In the end, however, the matter was suitably arranged; it was obviously highly desirable to keep the officers with their men, and after all the sole reason for the presence of the Legation Guard was the personal safety of the diplomatists, whose hearts were at

last melted ; they found their new neighbours quite fitted for intercourse with non-military persons.

Mention of diplomatists naturally makes one think of the Foreign Office, and one of them, recently arrived from England, told me that this Department of State already, in October 1906, regarded China as a "regenerated country teeming with countless armed and efficient millions." The idea seemed to be, although I could not follow the argument, that China must therefore be on our side in the future to the mutual benefit of both nations.

One thing at Peking struck me as being very odd : the legation compound was liable to be rushed at any hour of the day or night by a Chinese mob, for there was neither guard nor sentry on the entrance gate ; the probability was that this was not likely to happen for some time, at any rate, but after all it did not seem right that some hundreds of British soldiers should be exposed to the risk together with the diplomatists ; and so the system was altered, but opposition was encountered at first on the part of some subordinates on Jordan's staff, which was a large one.

This went back to days before my time when some of them were annoyed by the soldiers not saluting them, and there had been at least one lady among their wives who was most indignant at being refused an escort of mounted infantry during her rides abroad, while others of the fair sex also complained that the men did not salute them. The Minister was, of course, always accorded military honours, but the King's Regulation for the Army did not authorize these marks of distinction being broadcasted. I am bound to say everybody, male and female, seemed very peacefully inclined in my time.

After the Boxers had been suppressed, and the legations relieved, great quantities of stores and comforts were kept by us at Peking for the troops in view of possibilities. On inspecting them I found that the champagne was Ayala of 1889 vintage, an excellent year ; but this wine goes off after fifteen years or so. Most of the bottles which I saw were ullaged, and after a lot of correspondence with London, authority was given for it to be sold by auction

on condition that no officers' mess should purchase any of it ; the wine was sold for a mere song, whereas it should have fetched a very high price if it had been got rid of earlier. The supply of anæsthetics, extraordinary to relate, was deplorably inadequate, so I was informed, but this deficiency was rectified.

My visit to Peking enabled me to pick up some old threads, for Mr. (now Sir Lancelot) Carnegie was there with his wife ; we had served together in St. Petersburg and Berlin, and he was on the point of being transferred to another post in Europe. Count von Rex, the German Minister, was an old friend of my Russian days, and always welcomed me most warmly. He hated his post, and felt like a fish out of water, for he was unhappy when out of the big world ; his cook and wines were admirable, and were always at my disposal whenever the opportunity offered itself. Monsieur Bapst, the French Minister, was another old acquaintance from Russia ; he had a guard of about the same strength as ours, and so had the Japanese, but the Americans and Germans maintained only a handful each.

On arriving in North China I found the troops were scattered in too many stations, which had been occupied during the recent troubles ; some of these detachments would have been entirely isolated in the event of a rising, and thus cut off from all supplies. Very shortly after taking over the command I outlined a plan whereby the garrison at Tientsin should be substantially augmented, and the other isolated posts abolished ; one of these was really a police force for the protection of some coal-mines, but as the coal would be useless if the mines were cut off, it seemed a mistake to keep troops there to risk the same fate.

I have purposely said that I only outlined the scheme, for the working out of the details necessary before it could be laid before the War Office was done by my staff, Major Daniell, Royal Irish, Major Blair, R.E., and Captain Muscroft, of the Indian Army ; three better men were not to be found anywhere. The new plan also had the advantage of increasing the efficiency of the force, making its



members more comfortable, and saving our public purse about £30,000 net annually on a small military budget.

The War Office, after examining my project, sanctioned it, and the event justified the scheme when the revolutionary troubles occurred four or five years later, after I had left China. My share in it had consisted merely in propounding the raw idea, while the credit for the real hard work concerning the minute details connected with the plan is entirely due to those gifted officers.

In China, where the system of "squeeze" has, I believe, been brought to the highest possible pitch of perfection, there was at least one Englishman who believed, or at any rate said, that the new building contract must have been extremely profitable for me, who was supposed to have exacted a thumping big commission. I knew nothing of this for a long time until the late Dr. Morrison, the justly celebrated correspondent of the *Times* at Peking, informed me of the accusation. He did not credit it, and as a rule it is not worth while to fasten on false statements concerning oneself. In this instance, however, I thought that he should know all the facts, as public money was in question, so I sent him my London and Tientsin pass-books, together with all the correspondence relating to the matter. He replied on October 6, 1909, as follows :

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"Many thanks for your note of October 1, with its interesting enclosures. The figures are most striking, and the remarkable economy you have effected is a public service. I heartily congratulate you, for the economy is coexisting with increased efficiency.

"Very sincerely yours,

"(Sd.) G. MORRISON."

There was a curious sequel to this episode. The saying that people in glass houses should be careful not to throw stones occurred to me, and as my detractor was known to have come to China from overseas, I sent a description of the moralist to the Governor of a Dominion, and asked for some information about him.

It then transpired that he had left the other country after having served a long term of hard labour there for embezzlement under another name, so I thought I might fairly ask the culprit not to judge others by himself. He wrote me a letter in reply expressing deep contrition ; he had heard the rumour from somebody else whom he nobly did not name, and recognized that he should have verified his references, but this would have been difficult in the circumstances. He finished by saying that he hoped I should forgive him, and not take away his character in a place where, as a repentant sinner, he was endeavouring to earn an honest living ! I was sorry for the poor rascal, and complied with his petition ; he was still prospering when I left China, his past being comfortably buried.

I must take permission to digress for a moment in order to relate a couple of anecdotes about Dr. Morrison, who wielded such deservedly powerful influence at one time with the Chinese Republican Government.

He had arranged, as a young man, to leave Australia for England in order to study for his future profession ; his passage had been paid for, but on the eve of sailing he dreamt that the ship was lost at sea, and that he and his brother, who was to accompany him, were drowned. The dream made such a strong impression on him that he forfeited his passage money and endeavoured unsuccessfully to persuade his brother to do likewise ; but he refused. The vessel sailed without Dr. Morrison, and was never heard of again.

The other story is of a different nature. Morrison was dining at the British Legation one evening to meet an English lady, who had been visiting her brother in the Antipodes, where he was a Governor. She was aware that Morrison was an Australian, but she had the same opinion of his countrymen as Mrs. Frances Trollope had of United States citizens, of whom I have the kindest recollections, and emulated her by expressing venomous but unfounded criticisms. Morrison at last interposed the remark that the trouble was no doubt caused by the British Government of the day usually sending such asinine representatives to Australia and New Zealand.

This roused the lady's ire, and she retorted :

" Perhaps you are not aware that my brother is Governor there ? "

" Oh, is he ? " replied Morrison, " then in that case you know all about it ! "

In connexion with the question of " squeeze," anybody in my position could have made a substantial fortune in four years, while the troops would have still been splendidly fed at an extremely low cost. My Number One servant came to me one day, when a new British regiment was due to arrive. He had a friend who wished to have the monopoly of selling fruit in barracks, and these hawkers are sometimes made to give a sum, which is paid into a regimental fund for the benefit of the men and their families, in return for the privilege ; hawkers must be licensed in order to ensure that their wares are wholesome.

A case of this kind would be for the commanding officer to decide, but I thought it might help him if he should know of a good, reliable, man immediately on arrival. My servant's " face " was involved, so he was sure to recommend only a friend who could be depended upon. I asked Number One what amount the latter proposed to pay, and he replied : " Oh, perhaps 1,000 dollars " (Mexican, about 2s.) each.

I was surprised at the large figure, and exclaimed : " Oh ! " He misunderstood me, and promptly added, " 1,500," thinking I was not satisfied with the smaller figure for myself ! He would, of course, also have taken a fat commission, but the fruit would still have been not only very good but very cheap as well.

Generalizations are proverbially dangerous without exact knowledge. The late Dr. Smith, an American missionary, was a wonderful mine of information concerning the Chinese, whom he regarded with a very sympathetic eye, and he was an unusually broad-minded man. He said, however, that nobody had ever told the ~~whole~~ truth about China because nobody knew it ; he also believed that she can never be reformed from within, and perhaps only by moral, but not by physical, force from without. He wondered whether her patient, tireless, phlegmatic,

millions will not in the twentieth century prove better fitted to survive in their land than the highly strung and impatient Westerner.

Just before he was starting on a visit to the United States he told my wife that China was changing rapidly—so did others—but that it was very perilous to dogmatize about her. “Some sudden change might occur between the time I leave this house and when I reach my steamer at the Bund.” He was referring to the lightning-like waves of passion which sometimes sweep over China, each one more wide-embracing than its immediate predecessor.

I was invited to attend some Chinese army manoeuvres in October, which were to be carried out by troops trained on Western lines, and the prospect was very alluring as I should be able to compare them with what I had seen of similar exercises in Europe. A Chinese infantry battalion had been raised about the time when we seized Wei-Hai-Wei in 1898, and had been trained to a high pitch of perfection by Colonel Bower, Major Bruce, and other British officers. It had, however, been disbanded shortly before my arrival in China on the ground that it was a useless expense, but it only cost £25,000 a year. The northern Chinese are a stouter race physically than those in the south, but the latter are said to possess intellectual qualities superior to their brethren. It may be so; I do not know; but the Northerner, whether Mandarin, merchant, or coolie, seemed to me to be very remarkably astute; usually they were exceedingly pleasant to deal with, and occasionally all were extremely aggravating.

## CHAPTER XXII

THE Governor-General of Chih-li, of which Tientsin is the capital, was Yuan-Shi-kai when I went to China, and he had raised and maintained a large body of Chinese troops trained on European lines. In 1905 he had carried out some manœuvres with them, and in 1906 he proposed to repeat the experiment on a larger scale, and invited a number of foreign officers to be present; so I decided to avail myself of the kind invitation.

Anybody who has perused the German portion of this volume will have noticed that I attended Kaiser manœuvres on three occasions, and have written scarcely anything of a military nature about them; people are not, I imagine, interested in that sort of thing, so I confined myself chiefly to small-talk, and propose to follow the same course now.

Yuan-Shi-kai was well aware that troops, unless they are regularly paid, and disciplined, are a positive danger to everybody, and ordinary Chinese soldiers were experts in pillaging the unfortunate inhabitants of any district through which they might pass. The Governor-General had gradually expanded his army until, in 1906, I believe it numbered about thirty thousand men; properly paid and officered, they enabled him to maintain complete order, and in this as in all other cases Yuan's exactions for the money necessary for his civil and military schemes were as small as possible; at least this was the general belief.

I had been invited to bring a couple of officers to the manœuvres, and was exceptionally fortunate, because that great traveller, the late Brigadier-General George Pereira, formerly an officer in the Coldstream Guards, was also present. He was one of the greatest authorities

on Chinese affairs, and as delightful a friend as he was skilled in his profession ; his untimely death after a miraculous journey, extending over a long period, was an immense loss to the public service as well as to those who knew and loved him. Nothing could daunt him, not even his shocking bad health, and it was obvious to every eye how greatly the Chinese appreciated him ; he was as gentle as a lamb, full of humour, and therefore all the more helpful to everybody ; Yuan told me how much the manœuvres owed to Pereira's counsel and helpful advice.

In addition to my officers two mounted Sikh orderlies and my head groom accompanied me, and I do not think I can do better than quote what I wrote at the time to my wife, who was still in England. Very elaborate instructions had been issued for the manœuvres, and they ranged over a large field, from the commands-in-chief to the Press censor, from field-guns to the quality of the wine at the foreign officers' mess.

My party left Peking about seven o'clock in the morning of October 19 for Chang-te-fu, a city of about 100,000 inhabitants in the Honan Province, where we arrived at 7.30 p.m. Everything was done in fine style, a *train de luxe*, which had been constructed in France, being placed at our disposal ; we were on the line to Hankow, and on its eastern side, near Peking, could be seen the celebrated bridge described by Marco Polo.

I wrote :

"We are being done extra top-hole by the Chinese authorities in the way of food, housing, sponges, hairbrush, comb, and tooth-brush—I mean one set for each guest. The Germans have brought twice as many officers as were invited. There are only two generals, the Japanese and myself ; the former is, I am glad to say, the senior, and is your old friend who was military attaché with us at Berlin ; he speaks German well. You will remember his difficulty in recognizing Europeans, and how he was always asking to be introduced to you, and finally changed over and took you to be Ewart's wife, and repeated the process.

"I like the Americans very much ; one of them lost his left arm, during the Boxer troubles I think. We are

all housed in a Chinese school which has been done up for us. The Governor-General, Yuan-Shi-kai, comes to-morrow, *it is said*; last year a bomb was thrown at his railway carriage, but missed him, so now his departure is kept secret, and troops are stationed all along the line, just as in Russia for the Emperor.

"Two American female military correspondents have turned up, and insist on having passes for the manœuvres; the Mandarin Tsai, a friend of mine from Tientsin, who speaks excellent English, and is in charge of us, does not know, he told me, how to deal with the application!

"CHANG-TE-FU, *October 20*.—After breakfast most of the officers, including Pereira, started off to see a Chinese camp nine miles distant, but they all tailed off, except P. and one other, before arriving at their destination. They had been told here they might see everything, but were met with all kinds of difficulties and lies; Pereira, however, was very firm, and finally had his own way completely. I understand the chief reason for this obstruction is the universal Chinese habit of agreeing to almost any proposal, and then leaving it to their subordinates to thwart you. Officials know quite well that the orders which they issue will not be obeyed! This is said to be the age-long custom of the country, and I suppose saves a deal of bother.

"I rode out to the Canadian Presbyterian Mission, which is situated outside the city walls (even every village has its rampart to keep out marauders); they are very nice people, and their babies seem to arrive at regular intervals; the climate of North China is grand for children. I saw the two American girl journalists who are staying there (the missionaries are, as I learnt during the Russo-Japanese War, extraordinarily hospitable everywhere); they are touring the world, and living by their pens, and *Harper's Magazine* has promised them £65 for an account of the manœuvres.

"They asked me for my opinion as to their chances, so I told them that if they had been British subjects, I would have had them deported to Peking; they shock Chinese prejudices, but are lion-hearted girls, who cannot understand that they should not risk riding about among the soldiery. Having been induced to abandon the horse-back scheme, they now want to go out daily chaperoned by Mrs. Goforth (a good name, as Pereira says, for a

missionary); but then she would be compelled to carry her twelve-months-old baby all the time! I told the girls they are a very selfish pair of imps, but they are exceedingly resolute 'go-getters.' We were very friendly, but Mrs. G., I am glad to say, has stood firm and refuses to be trampled upon. This setback did not, however, end the matter: they had commandeered somebody else from Peking! They certainly deserve success, but may be a little trying to live with.

"This afternoon a German officer in uniform incautiously went outside the city wall without his pass (I sleep with mine!), and was not allowed to enter again, until some affable Chinese official came along and rescued him; he was much upset at the indignity offered to the Kaiser's coat.

"The Governor-General arrived this evening; he is only forty-seven years of age, and is the youngest and most powerful man of his position in China, I am told. It is said he means to make himself Regent when the Empress Dowager dies, and perhaps Emperor.

"The Chinese, in their anxiety to do us well and to impress us with their efficiency, whitewashed the walls of our rooms, and painted the chairs black; the former comes off on everything, and so does the paint, which had not had time to dry. Of course I don't know, but this may be a ruse to make us lose more 'face' than ever while offering unbounded hospitality!

"Ogorodnikov, the Russian military agent at Peking, told me to-day that he has a tremendous lot of politico-military work to do; the Russians must be always intriguing.

"CHANG-TE-FU, *October 21*.—The Chinese authorities have definitely refused to allow the American girls to attend the manœuvres at all, and this is much the wisest arrangement.

"The Governor-General, and his coadjutor, the Manchu general—the latter a great favourite of the Empress Dowager as one might expect—received the foreign visitors at two o'clock, the interpreter being a Mr. Li (a good name!) who is a first-rate English scholar. We all sat round a big table, I on the left of the Japanese general, who was opposite the Governor-General; this arrangement found me in my proper place also, namely, face to face with the Manchu general, who was on Yuan's right hand.



“ Then a curious thing happened : instead of addressing my senior brother G.O.C. first, Yuan-Shi-kai spoke to me, and I knew this was a dig at the *Englishman of the East* which very much surprised me ; no foreigner could learn Chinese customs in a century, and I have only been days in the Celestial Empire, but I had already been told that the Chinese attach enormous importance to forms of ceremony and politeness. I am beginning to wonder whether my Japanese colleague will cause some trouble before our visit comes to an end, but I suppose it is all right.

“ After the G.-G. and I had complimented each other, he then addressed the general company in courteous terms, but his remarks were translated only into English, which some of the foreign officers are not acquainted with. Yuan is of medium height, and very powerfully built, with a pleasant face. I asked Mr. Li privately afterwards to tell the G.-G. how much I appreciated his kind remarks, and asked him to say I hoped there would be no fresh instance of arresting or maltreating our Chinese employees, while I, for my part, promised to punish adequately any offence committed in Chinese territory, and to inform his Excellency accordingly. Mr. Li replied he was sure it would be all right in future, and that the previous case was due to the ‘ stupidity ’ of a Chinese police magistrate ; it may be so, but I have my doubts.

“ Having now spent two days here in idleness we start at eight o'clock to-morrow morning for the first day's manœuvres, our horses having been sent on by train. The Manchu coadjutor is hugely fat, and has eyes like slits, mere lines in fact, but he is said to be very influential and occupies also, I believe, the post of Minister of War. Our horses having been dispatched by train, have now been sent back here to proceed with us to-morrow. The fact is that the Chinese authorities, as one of them told me, do not like to run the risk of sending them to a camp where the troops belong to different parts of the country, and there is no great swell at hand to protect the animals from being stolen. This appears to be only the second occasion in Chinese history (1905 was the first) that large bodies have been concentrated for manœvre purposes, and it is thought the temptation might be too great !

“ It is very curious how everything, including orders, instructions, menus, and speeches, is all done in English

(except speeches in Chinese translated into our language) so that anyone who is not British or American must do the best he can. It seems to me that we have excellent opportunities of extending and improving our relations with the Celestial Empire, if we set about it in the right way, but I am not going to generalize about China! I know enough to abstain from that foolishness.

"CHANG-TE-FU, *October 22*.—We started at 8 a.m., left the train at 8.45, and then rode to the scene of action, which was reached about 10 o'clock. Something happened which reminded me of former days at German manœuvres where things sometimes went wrong: a cavalry charge had been fixed to take place at 11 o'clock, but when the Governor-General and his coad. (who is evidently relegated to a minor position here, as Yuan always rode ahead of him) appeared at 10.30 o'clock, one cavalry commander mistook his escort for the enemy's horse. It was promptly routed, for to say nothing of numbers it was naturally not expecting the onslaught; I do not know whether the erring commander is still alive, but the whole day was spoilt somehow, and the proceedings were all over a few minutes afterwards; perhaps the moral shock was too great.

"During the brief performance, however, the formations were well kept; the men were all of good physique, and the infantry and cavalry were armed with magazine rifles, the latter being equipped with swords in addition, and mounted on the savage little ponies of the country; they might be dangerous among themselves but not for anybody else; it is a different affair as regards the infantry, who are hardy, patient, nerveless fellows. There is here undoubtedly the foundation of a formidable army disposing of an unlimited supply of men, but its development depends on whether there will be others like Yuan-Shi-kai, with his resolution and far-sightedness.

"I was glad to make the acquaintance of Dr. Morrison, known to all the world as the correspondent of the *Times* at Peking; he was kind enough to say that he had hoped to see me here. I had a long conversation with him and liked him very much; he is so *sensible*, and is, I believe, unrivalled in the art of obtaining information, although I understand he does not speak one word of Chinese; he is an Australian.

"All servants were to be warned not to approach the

Governor-General, and when I told my *mafoo* (groom) of this injunction he explained, with a little English and unmistakable signs of contempt, that he had no desire whatever to go near him ! When we arrived at the railway station for our return journey to Chang-te-fu there was a train just about to start ; thinking it was ours I made a dash at it, but the groom remonstrated, saying, ' It is only the Chinese man ! ' This remark might of course have had two meanings, but I have heard that *mafoo* had been at one time an active Boxer. He has the most magnificent queue which I ever saw, and it is all his own hair, which is not always the case.

" CHANG-TE-FU, *October 23.*—The day before yesterday a Chinese officer asked the chiefs of Missions separately whether we were satisfied with the ' poor accommodation ' offered to us. My answer was that a vast deal more than was necessary is being done for us all, and that Chinese hospitality was really too extravagant. I thought all this was merely Chinese politeness, but I have since heard that the Japanese general has complained to the Governor-General that he was not being treated with sufficient attention, and threatened to leave, whereupon the other senior officers were interrogated on the subject. The Japanese case collapsed, and the general is still here. I imagine that the fact of Yuan addressing me first when he received us after arrival was at the bottom of the incident.

" My colleague, however, is evidently anxious to make trouble if he can ; goodness knows why ! A Russian colonel arrived only yesterday evening from Harbin, having been delayed on his journey, so Ogorodnikov inquired whether a junior officer, whom he was going to send away to-day, might still sleep in our quarters last night. The Chinese readily assented to the request, a very reasonable one, but about ten o'clock they came to ask him to send the junior away at once, and to find a lodging for him in a Chinese inn, because the Japanese had complained that four Russians were present as compared with only three Japanese, and not for one night would he put up with this.

" Ogorodnikov, the chief of the Russian Mission, told the Japanese that they were all in China and not in Japan, and that he certainly would not move an officer merely to please the Japanese. He consented, however, to do

this when the Chinese asked it as a personal favour to Yuan-Shi-kai. I was glad to be able to mount the colonel from Harbin, as there was no other available animal here, and it was pleasant to be able to do something for the Russians after all the kindnesses showered upon me in their land. It is very odd: all this rumpus about one extra Russian for less than twelve hours, whereas the Germans have brought six officers, three of them being uninvited guests.

"This ridiculous scheming and squabbling is also a great nuisance for our host, the Governor-General. It appears that the Japanese had asked to be allowed to bring four officers, and the request had been refused, for, after all, the accommodation is rather limited. The Germans had, as a matter of fact, announced their intention of bringing six officers, and the Chinese had not objected, but when the Japanese heard of this in Peking they inquired from Pereira what I proposed to do in the matter; they wished me to object to so many Germans. He had told them that I did not mind how many came; I had been asked to bring two officers besides myself, and in spite of some pressure had refused to allow a fourth to appear in the nominal guise of a Press correspondent; if the Chinese are so polite and hospitable everybody should take particular care to be courteous in return.

"I asked Morrison whether Japan really wishes to see a strong Chinese army, and he told me he thinks that she instructs, and partly officers, Chinese troops in order to remain the principal Power, and keep out others as far as possible.

"The manœuvres to-day were a set piece—like some others I have seen in Europe—and of no special interest; but all the men were very sturdy, well armed, and carried heavy packs. The possibilities are very great, but China requires not one but many Yuans.

"There are two princes of the Imperial Family here, one elderly, and the other young; I rather think the latter is the one who came with the Mission of Atonement to Potsdam after the suppression of the Boxers. They wished me to be presented to them to-day, and after we had exchanged greetings and compliments, they asked me for my Chinese visiting cards; on pulling out my pocket-book to extract them, another kind of flimsy paper flew out in all directions, which gave a touch of

amusement to the proceedings! I rode home the fourteen miles instead of waiting for the train, and got there first.

"CHANG-TE-FU, October 24.—To-day was the last day of the manoeuvres, and resulted in a glorious victory for the Governor-General's troops. The American Eagle is undefeatable! To-day I came across the two girl journalists who had been present throughout our stay; certainly they deserved success; they have seen everything, and said they have written 'a lovely account' of the manoeuvres.

"To jump to another subject, Morrison told me to-day that when the death of Queen Victoria was expected to occur at any moment, the *Times* management decided to print two issues of the paper for the following day; one was to have an obituary notice of twenty-three columns, if her death should be announced before the hour of issue to the public, while the other copy was to contain the ordinary news and advertisements which would otherwise have been crowded out. The news of the demise came, however, in time for only one copy to be printed.

"The Japanese general is still in the sulks and did not come to dinner yesterday; he said he was ill, but seemed all right to-day. The missionaries told me that the villagers in this region have not suffered at all from depredations by the troops; Yuan evidently knows how to maintain order.

"I must tell you a capital story about *mafoo*. He told me last night that he wished to get a pass to see the manoeuvres to-day, so I took him with me to interview an Excellency, as there was the order forbidding underlings from approaching the Governor-General; I could not of course understand a word of what passed between the two, so do not know what use, if any, my stud groom made of my name, but he appeared to be addressing the other in a very off-hand manner. This morning I saw him on an exceptionally good-looking pony, and inquired where he had got it from; he said he had hired it from a Chinese cavalry officer for the equivalent of two farthings! He is really priceless, and a constant source of amusement, admiration, and sometimes anxiety.

"CHANG-TE-FU, October 25.—There was a grand review and march-past of all the troops this forenoon; fifteen thousand men were on parade, and everything was very

well done indeed. Truly there is the material in North China, at any rate, for a most powerful army; the unfortunate part of the business was the damage done to the villagers' growing wheat, for which there is, I was told, no compensation; these poor devils can scarcely live as it is.

"It seems that my presence at these manoeuvres has had a calming effect on some of the foreign visitors; this sounds almost incredible, but Pereira and Morrison both said so to me; they vow that there would have been otherwise frightful rows. I was consulted by malcontents on either side, but why people should always be on the look-out to cause trouble beats me, and it is very unfair to the Governor-General, and unpleasant for him also; he has done everything possible to make our visit an enjoyable one, and is nervous lest there shall be political repercussions at Peking which may get him into trouble with the Empress Dowager.

"We all lunched with him to-day, 1,800 guests in a huge tented enclosure; it was a stand-up affair, as it would have been impossible to provide a sufficient number of chairs, while it would have been impolite for some of the guests to be seated if others had to be on their feet. The Japanese general and Lord High Waters were the two principal guests.

"Trouble was not, however, at an end. I told you that the Japanese had objected to the presence of more than three Russians, and got their way, one unfortunate Muscovite being turned out in the night. Now, it seems, there are more than three Japanese, and Ogorodnikov had Yuan-Shi-kai informed just before luncheon commenced that neither he nor his officers would be present at it if more than three of his enemies should attend. This was exceedingly awkward for poor Yuan, who was afraid of making the Japanese angry, and his efforts to overcome Ogorodnikov's objection proving useless, the Russians went away.

"Yuan and the other big Chinese authorities were greatly upset, and I condoled most sincerely with the former. He said that the Japanese must be exceedingly ill-bred fellows for having insisted on a Russian being turned out while they added to the authorized number of three by bringing other officers in the guise of Press correspondents. Civilian reporters were permitted to be

present ; we have several, and the Chinese argument is that if the Russian demand for the expulsion of the Japanese ones had been complied with, then somebody else would have asked for those of another country to be sent away, or at any rate not to be permitted to eat ! The whole thing was an extremely bad display of manners on the part of guests, who might at least have waited for a more suitable opportunity to air their grievances.

" Yuan got hold of me after luncheon in order to talk about the row, and he was evidently very unhappy. I then had a happy thought ; Excellency Tsai, who speaks perfect English, was interpreter, so I asked him to tell the Governor-General that in my opinion the Chinese had been much too hospitable ; they had showered good food and good wine on us, and the high living had been too much for some of the guests and had upset their stomachs. He was so delighted with my explanation that he roared with laughter, and became quite cheerful again ; I told him that if there should be any after-effects he could call upon me to give him all possible backing.

" Just after we had finished discussing the subject, Pereira came up and heard Yuan ask me how old I am ; before I could reply the G.-G. went on and said : ' I think you must be seventy ; no, eighty at least ! ' Pereira hastily whispered to me that this was a great compliment, and meant that my wisdom was far in advance of my years ; the Chinese have, so far as my brief experience of them goes, a rich sense of humour, and my remark about the stomach being the root of most evils was evidently a very happy one !

" This afternoon the Governor-General and his Manchu watcher came to call upon the foreign officers, and the Japanese general, and I, did the honours, offering them and their suite champagne provided by the Chinese themselves !

" We leave to-night for Peking. I have had a talk with Ogurodnikov and think he is going to let the Russo-Japanese affair drop ; I told him that there was nothing to be got out of it. I ought really to write a report on these manoeuvres with lovely maps—which somebody else would have to draw for me ; but it would be of no use to anybody even if I could compile a good one, which is beyond me ; as you know I have always looked upon this sort of thing as a picnic when one is only an onlooker ;

it is the sidelights which interest me ! One sure fact has emerged : Yuan and his Mandarins have been really happy only with the British and United States Missions of the great Powers ; with the two exceptions I have mentioned above, all of them have been most pleasant, but I can't help feeling that the Chinese were nervous lest one or more of the others should create difficulties, whereas they were confident that we and the Americans only wished to be as helpful as possible. Captain Clifford, who commands the U.S.A. Guard, is a capital fellow.

"PEKING, *October 26.*—We got back here after a comfortable all-night journey, and I enjoyed my trip very much. Our hosts were all that hosts should be *apparently*, but the Chinese have a curious trait of always wishing to make the foreigner 'lose face' before their own people ; the foreigner may and probably does not know that this is happening, but that does not matter ; he has lost it, and that's all which matters ! I had been warned of this national characteristic, but was certainly not seeking trouble ; yesterday, however, two tents had been pitched at the saluting base for the march-past ; I had no intention of entering either of them, but when Morrison told me they were to be reserved for Chinese only, I asked Excellency Tsai—I believe one of my predecessors had once threatened to hang him—which of the two was for foreign Press correspondents. He answered that he was extremely sorry, but the latter had been forgotten this year. I said I was sure that Chinese hospitality was too great for this to be possible, and would he please find out which tent they were to occupy. He went round the corner, waited a moment or two, and then returned, very apologetic, to inform me he had been 'extremely stupid,' and that of course one of the tents was for foreigners !

"Well, I must get back to work, and am glad that I came through it all so pleasantly, for I was on the best of terms with all the foreign Missions, U.S.A., French, Germans, Russians, Austrians, Italians, Dutch, and Japanese ; in fact, after dinner was over on our last evening, to my surprise they drank my health and gave me an enthusiastic rendering of 'For he's a jolly good fellow' ; I am sure I don't know why they honoured me, but this will make your wifely heart feel proud !"



## CHAPTER XXIII

**YUAN-SHI-KAI** was the first Governor-General of the metropolitan Province of Chih-li with whom I had relations. He was a Chinese and had, therefore, a Manchu as co-adjutor; this was the invariable practice of the Manchu dynasty so as to maintain the principle of equipoise in every office of any importance; if a Manchu should hold the titular post, then he would have a Chinese to keep an eye on and report to Peking about him. Yuan was, however, such an exceptionally gifted man that he was in fact what he was in name—that is to say the unchallenged ruler of his huge territory, which was said to contain some ten million people, but he had occasional and afflicting ups and downs under the Empire as well as under the Republic until his death in 1916.

He was a self-made man; in his younger days he had served in that extremely business-like Department, the Chinese Maritime Customs, and this had given him a very good insight into Western characteristics. He had maintained order fairly well during the Boxer rising in Shantung, where he foresaw that foreign Powers would crush the insurgents, and was then transferred to Chih-li.

The Empress Dowager, **Tsu Hsi**, one of the most remarkable figures in history, while being a thorough-going reactionary, sometimes thought it advisable to employ progressive men in Chih-li, where the foreigner was powerful and close to Peking; she died in November, 1908, and the Emperor, **Kwang Hsu**, was said to have pre-deceased her by a day or two. She had twice been compelled to fly for her life from Peking on the approach of foreign troops, yet when she received me early in 1907 she was more powerful than ever before, and seized that opportunity of having a hearty thrust at diplomatists. This episode has



EMPEROR KWANG HSU

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DOWAGER EMPRESS TSU HSI



been, however, described in detail elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> There was a Regency after the deaths of the Emperor and Empress Dowager, and this was soon followed by a Revolution and a Republic.

Sun-Yat-Sen was its first President, but was replaced provisionally in February 1912, by Yuan, who was definitely proclaimed President for five years in October 1913. He was a monarchist, whether originally anti-dynastic or not I am not aware, but he was always convinced, I am sure, that a Republic would lead to endless civil war. He recognized the need for the practical dictatorship of a strong man in his distracted land, and was proclaimed Emperor in December 1915. But Japan was opposed to him; she feared that Yuan might build up a China strong enough to show her independence of foreign Powers. Like other people, Yuan had made mistakes; perhaps the greatest one had been when, as Chinese Resident in Corea, he had favoured war with Japan in the nineties, believing the latter would be defeated.

Yuan was nevertheless a remarkably capable and enlightened man; this was obvious, although neither he nor any other Governor-General of my acquaintance knew our language. Their interpreters were, however, extraordinarily proficient; on one occasion I had asked a great Chinese scholar, Dr. Gatrell, to accompany me as observer at a rather important interview with a Governor-General, and he told me afterwards that the interpreter had expressed exactly every shade of our respective remarks, and there was never the slightest hesitation.

There were three Governors-General of Chih-li during my four years in China. Yuan-Shi-kai was called to some unimportant office in Peking which caused him, as he told my wife who met him there one day, to be up by three o'clock in the morning so as to be in time to see the sun rise, as he put it, and he was soon afterwards disgraced by the Prince Regent in January 1909. When the dynasty was, however, tottering to its fall, the Regent had to implore Yuan's aid in October 1911. Something shall be

<sup>1</sup> *In Secret and Confidential*, p. 65.

said in Chapter XXV about the two Governors-General who came after Yuan.

He had not known me many weeks before he brought up the subject which was, he said, uppermost in his mind and in that of the educated Chinese, namely, the revision of the treaties whereby foreigners were assured of extra-territoriality and other privileges; his point was that China had been compelled by force to submit to these treaties. His arguments made so much impression on me that I reported them at the time, in December 1906, to King Edward, for the question was evidently one which was bound to become acute as soon as a favourable opportunity should present itself to the Chinese; the situation of to-day was certain to arise some time, but it might, I believe, have been rendered easier of solution if the Powers had not waited until their hands were forced. My opinion is, of course, merely that of an outsider with no reliable source of current information available, but, judging by what well-informed foreigners and Chinese told me twenty years ago, it looks as if the European Governments realized only late in the day the growing strength of the Young China party which is fighting the reactionaries, while both are at one in their detestation of the foreigner, and are so conservative that they believe they alone are endowed with true wisdom.

Yuan-Shi-kai founded schools, hospitals, and infant industries; amongst others, a match factory was established; each match was made singly by hand, for there were plenty of patient workers available and labour was extraordinarily cheap; three boxes cost only one farthing to buy, and each held the usual number of good matches. Yuan was also a firm believer in discipline; there was a report one day in an English newspaper that six men had been executed for having stolen a few pieces of iron from a platelayer's hut; I happened to see him shortly afterwards, and inquired as to the truth of the report. He fully confirmed it, adding that people must learn to respect the rights of property, and besides, he said, the population was so dense that it was just as well to put malefactors out of the way of temptation!

Money, or rather the want of it, was the great obstacle in the way of improvements ; it had to be raised from the people, who were always wretchedly poor, and only the merest fraction of the imposts levied was said to be applied to its proper purpose. Some faint idea of the administrative system may be gathered from the fact that all salaries were purely nominal. That of the Governor-General for one year was not sufficient to defray his indispensable official expenditure for one day, and even this trifling sum was subject to certain deductions ; indeed it happened sometimes that an official found it paid him better not to draw any pay at all, as the deductions would have amounted to more than its total. All of which means that no official could live unless he extorted money somehow by hook or by crook ; some men made immense fortunes, it was said, but I never heard the suggestion that Yuan was ever anything but a relatively poor man.

He had, of course, innumerable enemies at home, to say nothing of foreign ones, and this was due to the system. Yuan was not one of the *literati*, who were a very influential body and probably are so still, for they cannot all have died out within the last twenty years or so. They stood at the head of the list of callings into which the Chinese divided themselves ; next came the farmers, then the workmen, and lastly the traders. Soldiers were not mentioned, as being the dregs of humanity and beneath contempt. The *literati*, or scholars, often spent their lives in preparing for and passing examinations founded on the ancient classics, and elderly gentlemen, of ninety years or even more, were to be found continuing the process ! They were respected by the populace accordingly.

I was always on very good terms with each Governor-General, and when one of them came to my residence he was always given a Guard of Honour ; he appreciated this recognition of his position immensely, as it was not accorded to him by other foreign commanders, but after all we were no longer at war with each other, and the Chinese laid great stress on ceremony. A touch of Chinese humour, always present in Chinese minds, used to be shown when I called upon the Governor-General in the native city, and

the first display of it, for which I was unprepared, might have made me lose whatever "face" I possessed, which was probably not very much.

On riding into the courtyard of his Yamen with my escort of mounted infantry, a number of small bombs were exploded all around us ! The place was paved with slippery flagstones so that our startled animals, even if they had not slipped up, might have taken their riders unawares with their plunging, and have deposited my party in very undignified attitudes on the ground. This would have given enormous pleasure to the retainers looking on, and to those more highly placed ; but no offence could have been taken, for any remonstrance would have been met with the reply that the explosions were intended as a mark of honour for such a great personage as myself ! Our animals were all duly startled, and so were we, but fortunately my escort and I were equal to the occasion, and remained quite unperturbed.

When I arrived in Tientsin I wished to take over Colonel Bower's servants, but before they agreed to this proposal they inquired whether my temper was sufficiently agreeable ; reassured on this point, there was another conference below stairs, after which the head boy said his staff wished to know what kind of a temper the *Taitai* (Mrs. General) had, and I was able conscientiously to affirm that it was all that could be desired, whereupon they graciously consented to enter my service. There are all kinds of guilds in China, not the least important one being the Servants' Trade Union, and unless it was satisfied with you, proper household domestics were unobtainable ; an instance of this may be related.

The wives of some of my officers were kind enough to come to tea once before Mrs. Waters joined me. We were in the dining-room as the drawing-room was still in curl-papers, and when one of my guests inquired whether there was a good safe in the house I said there was a huge one, but it was useless as I had nothing to put in it, official documents being kept in the headquarter offices. She was astonished, and, pointing to some plate on the sideboard, asked :

"But don't you lock up all these things every night?"

"No," I replied, "I never lock up anything, neither money nor any other valuables."

"Well, then," was the retort, "you will soon be robbed, for the Chinese are dreadful thieves."

At that particular moment the head boy was handing her some cake, and he understood a certain amount of English, but not a muscle of his face moved as I glanced at him. I was torn between the desire not to say anything sharp in reply, nor to let my servants imagine that I mistrusted them in the slightest degree, but quick thinking made me decide on the former course as being the lesser of the two evils, so I said:

"I wish, Mrs. So-and-So, that you would not speak like that about my servants; I have the utmost confidence in all of them, and should not dream of insulting them by locking anything up, whether I am in Tientsin or absent."

The conversation then turned into a pleasanter channel, and I thought no more of the subject. On the very next night, however, the lady's own staff cleared off everything portable of value, locks being no obstacle to Chinese, and nothing was ever recovered. She and her husband remained for nearly two more years in North China, and during the whole of that period they could never procure a single high-class domestic, and had to get on as best they were able with men of the coolie class.

The Servants' Guild boycotted the unlucky couple. They had always had an orderly in the house at night in order to prevent robbery by servants, but one has to get up very early to try to get the better of the Chinese, and then the probability is that you will fail. As regards ourselves, during the whole of my four years' service in China we never locked up one single thing, nor did we ever lose anything of the value of a steel pin, except on one occasion; but I once saw a glazier, who had forgotten to bring his diamond-cutter, try to cut a piece of glass with one of our silver dessert knives, rather to its detriment.

It is not strictly accurate to say that we were once the losers through theft, as the circumstances were peculiar, owing to the very far-reaching Chinese system of responsi-



bility, which makes me believe that China will never become Bolshevik.

We were away once, and had taken Number One with us, and on our return I noticed that a German gun-metal watch, which I had had for years and never wore, was missing from the mantelpiece in my study, and the major-domo promised to institute an inquiry. On the following morning quite a good silver watch was in the place of the lost one, and it appeared that Number Two had been in charge during our absence, and a hawker had been seen about the place who must have found an opportunity of taking the watch. Its successor had belonged to the first footman, who thus replaced the lost property. After a few days I told the head servant that I proposed to let the original owner have it back, but was informed that this was quite unnecessary as the responsible one had already purchased another in its place. I made him a present of it on my departure from China.

The evasiveness of the Chinese, and their frequent if not usual want of frankness were aggravating; a servant, for instance, did not say outright that he wished to leave your service, but announced that he must visit a sick relative, and would return later; sometimes he spoke the truth, sometimes not; time alone could show. A case in point may be related. The same servant, who, as shall be told presently, risked his life to save Mrs. Waters's pet bird—and the Chinese have no sympathy even with human suffering—informed her one day that he was obliged to go away for a couple of months to look after a relation who was ill. He had been a long time with us, so at first she thought the reason given was the true one, but something caused her to reflect for an instant, and she said:

“I suppose you mean to leave us?”

Rather to her surprise and greatly to her delight, he then unburthens himself of his grievance. My wife's Scottish maid had followed, as time passed, the usual custom, and married an Englishman in a very good position in Tientsin; as my time there was approaching its end, it was not worth while to bring out another maid from England, so my wife engaged a Chinese one, an *amah*.

This was a very pretty, well-educated Cantonese girl, and I believe she was an excellent maid. It now appeared that Number One's grievance was twofold: firstly, my wife had engaged her, which was all wrong, while in the second place he had heard that she was to live upstairs, as her predecessor had done; the consequence was that the major-domo felt reluctantly compelled to hand in his portfolio.

As regards an ordinary household staff, its members had to be all northerners or all southerners; if they were mixed, there was sure to be trouble; in fact, if Number One engaged the servants—the wisest course—he would select only those of his own race, for the one detested the other, and could not speak the same language. It was, however, recognized that an *amah* stood in a different position; being body-servant to her mistress, the latter might select her, and a Cantonese was very much more the *femme de chambre* than her rougher northern sister. Number One on reflection gave way on this point, but was inflexible about the new maid's quarters; if she came in, he went out. He consented, however, to quite a nice room in the basement being placed at her disposal, and thus all was once more well, and remained so to the end. Another side to his character shall now be described.

Returning one day from a country ride we came across a tiny chicken, evidently only a few days old, which had strayed and lost itself; so my wife picked it up, brought it to our camp close to the Great Wall, and proper feeding soon made it strong; this little bird used to follow Mrs. Waters about like a dog, and when she was bathing in the sea it perched itself as near the water's edge as possible, awaiting her return. She was in her "Tubs Ablution No. 1" once after her swim when I heard her cry out, and the story being her own may be related; if I told it as having happened to myself nobody would believe it. Defenceless in her bath, she saw a snake, about a foot in length, crawling in her direction; the chicken, which was only about six weeks old, dashed at the reptile, struck it in the neck, and killed it instantly. I saw the dead snake where it lay, but my corroborative evidence would not help unbelievers!

Peterkin, as we called our little bird, was always taken with us to our summer camp, and he comes into the following story, which shows the devotion of Chinese if they are fond of you. With the approach of autumn, violent thunder and rain storms swept the district, and the flooded torrents, rushing down from the mountains, inflicted great damage. The troops were sent back to Tientsin in good time, and we remained in camp to see everything cleared up.

In September 1908 the weather was worse than usual ; it pelted with rain for thirty-six hours, and we had very considerable difficulty in reaching the railway station, two miles distant, having to wade knee-deep in places. The platform, which was a good height above the line, was flooded, and the European engineer was afraid it would be swept away if the downpour should continue ; a girder, sixty feet long, a little to the north of us, who wished to go south, was carried off by the torrent and was found two miles lower down the river.

We were becoming very anxious about the safety of our Number One and the first footman who were to follow us soon afterwards, and presently we saw them arrive at a wooden road bridge, which was still standing although the torrent was then pouring over it to a depth of several feet ; this bridge was about a hundred yards from the station and some fifteen yards in length. It was liable to be swept away at any moment, and seemed quite impassable, so we hoped our domestics would remain on the far side all night, for we could do nothing to help them. Instead, however, they came boldly on nearly up to their necks in water and gripping the hand-rail with one hand while, with the other, one of them held Peterkin aloft over his head and the other did the same for two finches in a cage ; thus at great personal risk they succeeded in getting across, and such devotion indicates the courage and tenacity of the Chinese race. The story of the finches may be told as being typical of the tireless patience of the Chinese.

One day in camp we saw a Chinese surrounded by a number of soldiers, who were watching some performance.

On going to look we found he had a couple of finches which were performing all kinds of tricks; he would throw a couple of grains of hemp-seed in the air together with a tiny, red, woollen ball; then he released a bird which caught the seeds and afterwards the ball, with which he returned to his master. Another trick was still more elaborate: the Chinese set up a cardboard fort, like a child's big toy, which had a small cannon mounted on the rampart. The gun was loaded and primed, a bird flew towards it, pulled a little lanyard with its beak, and the piece went off. This opened the door into the fort, and the finch entered, seized a tiny red umbrella, and brought it back to its master.

The whole thing was wonderful, and I inquired whether the owner would sell the birds, my idea being to bring them to London and get at least £100 a week from the Music Halls for exhibiting my show, a more profitable undertaking than following the drum; affluence seemed to be within my reach at long last. The Chinese was quite willing to sell, and as he asked only the equivalent of a pound for the pair I spent no time in bargaining, and the birds were mine. The former owner gave me precise instructions about feeding them; if one grain too much should be given, they would suffer in health, and it required, he told me, two years of unremitting patience to train the birds. Everything went well for some time, and our fortune seemed assured, but evidently we had not been feeding the finches in exactly the right way, for first one and then the other sickened and died; it was so sad, for they were such tame little things.

Undaunted we procured another pair, so as to have one in reserve; one of them broke its leg during some trick, but this was most skilfully set by our medical officer, and the bird was none the worse. After a while, however, I suppose we thought we were keeping the pair hungry and increased the ration, when the same result as before happened, and my dreams of wealth vanished; they were all very hardy birds, about the size of a hawfinch. Part of the training consisted in keeping them awake for months on end, so the Governor-General, Tuan Feng, told my wife.

We had no dogs ; there was so much hydrophobia in North China that I did not allow any to be kept in barracks either by officers or men. There had been a very sad case in the West Kent regiment just before my arrival in China ; a soldier's terrier was out of sorts, and while the man was fondling it the dog licked his lips, and the poor fellow had died in horrible agony.

Before the Emperor Kwang Hsu died in 1908 two Chinese doctors, who had been trained in the United States, were called in. Their position was very difficult, for they were not permitted to approach close to the patient and examine him, so their diagnosis was necessarily a sketchy one ; moreover, the usual penalty was death if the invalid should not recover, but they were told that in the circumstances three hundred strokes with the bamboo should be inflicted instead ; fortunately for the consultants, they were able to escape in time and fled from Peking.

As far as my experience went, once a bargain of any kind, official or commercial, was concluded one could always rely upon its being faithfully carried out, even if there were nothing in writing. Weeks, or even months, might, however, elapse before agreement was reached, for Orientals love arguing about terms, and the longer the wrangling lasted the better these were likely to be for the foreigner.

The Chinese had a splendid system for training domestic servants : your Number One Boy engaged and was responsible for all of them, otherwise the onus for anything wrong lay on your shoulders ; in the kitchen department the head cook—if your establishment required two or more—took apprentices, who paid him for the privilege of being instructed in the culinary art, and no chef in the world can beat a first-rate Chinese one. Generally speaking a domestic in China paid to learn his work before being placed in a situation, whereas in Europe the employer pays to have things broken, and replace them at his own expense.

Thrift reached its zenith in North China, where life is much more difficult than in the warm South ; the small

farmer kept his land so free from weeds that you could almost eat off it, and a coolie would always stop to pick up any bit of paper or refuse to serve as fuel ; the average wage for such a man, married and with probably young children, was five Mexican dollars, or about ten shillings monthly.

If a Chinese was suffering from a boil, a common complaint, a plaster was placed over it, with the result that another boil made its appearance elsewhere ; this went on until the sufferer had perhaps a dozen or more of these painful swellings, and then the matter became serious, necessitating an operation.

A party of ten soldiers, armed with rifles, and in charge of an officer, was dispatched in order to capture or slay a bandit ; when they eventually discovered him, he turned at bay, whereupon the soldiers fled. When the matter was being inquired into on their return, they were asked how they could have allowed their prey to escape them, as they were in such overwhelming force. The reply was that as the bandit was alone and offered only one target the bullets might easily have missed him, whereas he would probably have hit one of them if they had approached within range, for the bandit would have had eleven targets !

The chief Chinese magistrate of Tientsin, a very important and powerful personage, died, and the Governor-General informed me of the fact. As I had once had some little difficulty with the representative of the law I thought it would be courteous to pay my respects to his dead body, which had been neatly sealed up ; the family would appreciate the act. Accompanied by one of my officers we found his two sons, aged sixteen and fourteen respectively, grovelling at the head of the huge coffin ; they were swathed in white woollen garments, and crawled towards me when I appeared ; for a moment I thought they were two huge white dogs. They had to be there night and day, and all sorts of cakes and fruits were offered to help the spirit of the departed on its way, while paper horses, paper money, and other things were spread around ready to be burnt for its use ; candles and joss-

sticks were kept alight all the time, and ceaseless dirges were chanted. The unfortunate sons had a weary time, for they had to continue their vigil for months, as father could not be buried until the soothsayer announced that the date was propitious. This would not be until there was no more money to be extracted from the family in the shape of "refreshers," and as the magistrate was known to have been wealthy, months would elapse before the soothsayer let go of his purse.

The Chinese are extraordinarily resourceful. The present Bishop of Exeter and Lady Florence Gascoyne-Cecil were lunching with us one day prior to their departure on the same afternoon for Hankow. On learning that they had not engaged a servant to accompany them we were much distressed, for travelling in China without a domestic is bad enough for a man, and it was essential that the Bishop's wife should have somebody to look after luggage and arrange matters.

Their train was due to start in about a couple of hours' time, so quick action was imperative, and Mrs. Waters therefore asked Number One whether he could possibly do anything to help. Without a moment's hesitation he said that, if he might be permitted to withdraw for a few minutes so as to go to the telephone, everything should be satisfactorily arranged. This actually happened, and the new servant was awaiting the return of Lord William and his wife at their hotel; it was very gratifying to hear afterwards that he had given complete satisfaction, and had been most useful. It was the merest accident that the subject happened to have been mentioned, unless the will power of our major-domo compelled us to talk about it, which seems a rather far-fetched idea, but at any rate the thing was done, and well done, which was all that mattered. How it was accomplished we cannot say!

The outlook was black in North China in the spring of 1908, for a famine was threatening the land where the great mass of the inhabitants were at the best of times only one degree removed from starvation. There had not been a drop of rain for two months, the wheat was only four inches high, and the other seeds had mostly

been eaten in the ground. Heartfelt prayers for rain were therefore being uttered, and a missionary, who had just returned from the interior, described the following queer ceremony.

The dragon god, who sends the rain, is supposed to do so only when the ground is perfectly clean and tidy, so twenty pauper widows had been selected to go in procession through the fields with dustpans and brushes, and they made a pretence of sweeping as they went. It was pathetic. The missionaries themselves were confronted with awkward questions propounded by the native Christians, who had also been praying for rain with no better result, and they were exceedingly disgusted in consequence, for they had been told so much about the efficacy of prayer.

My *mafoo* was extraordinarily skilful at his work. I lent a pony once to a lady, who gave it the worst sore back I have ever seen; the wound was literally inches in length, and nearly an inch in depth. My intention was to have the poor animal shot, but my man vowed he could cure it, and did so within a month. On another occasion there was an excellent Australian mare for sale, but she was suffering very badly from chronic eczema; my faithful one again guaranteed a complete cure, which was so successful that there was never any relapse.

I took him with me out snipe shooting one day, and just as I fired a peasant rose and showed himself above the standing crop; the poor man's screams were pitiful, and I was afraid that he was very badly wounded; things were not, however, so bad as that, and he was overjoyed when I gave him five dollars. Just then *mafoo* arrived, and having examined the wounds inquired how much I had paid; he had seen money pass. On my telling him, he burst into a roar of laughter, and when he had recovered his breath, said that sort of reckless extravagance would never do; nobody could go out shooting, for the entire population would lay itself out to be hit for such a high reward! Insisting that twenty cents (about 5*d.*) was ample compensation, he made the unfortunate peasant disgorge the five dollars and was with difficulty persuaded



to let me pay fifty cents, of which no doubt the groom took thirty. If the original figure had been allowed to stand, my man would have gained proportionately; but your Chinese staff usually put their employer's interests above those of anybody else.

He showed the true Chinese dramatic instinct once when I had rebuked him severely for some row he had got into in the native city; my remarks had been followed by a slight tap on his head with my riding-switch, and he appeared later before me with a most solemn and reproachful countenance, his head being most artistically bound up in huge white bandages. There he stood, looking like an owl, and the sight was so ridiculous that I burst out laughing; to my surprise—and joy—he immediately followed suit and removed them; his idea had been that I should be alarmed at the damage done, and give him a handsome present.

The Chinese are great gamblers; any day on the wharves at Tientsin one could see the coolies gambling for their dinners; there were a number of travelling food-stalls with hot meats, and the Chinese are very particular about their *cuisine*; a cook would present a large tube full of long spillikins whence the hungry one drew a certain number; if one of them bore a winning mark the man got his dinner for nothing, otherwise he forfeited a farthing or so, and had to try again.

All one's servants gambled, but for more substantial sums. This was strictly forbidden in my house, and the order could be enforced, because my guard room and sentry overlooked the servants' quarters in the basement, and if lights were burning after a certain hour the sergeant of the guard would intervene and report the offenders next day. On one occasion it was reported to me that the military police had arrested my Number One Boy along with several other Chinese, and to make matters worse my domestic had been seen in the act of lunging at one of his friends with a large carving-knife, but fortunately had only scratched him when he was overpowered; he had been released on parole, for it was certain that he would not run away, as he would have "lost face" for

evermore had he done so, especially as he was responsible to me for everybody and everything in the house.

I interviewed the culprit on the following morning. It appeared that the reunion had taken place in the house of Major Angus Douglas-Hamilton, of the Cameron Highlanders. My Number One assured me that he was the aggrieved party; two nights previously he had, he said, lost about two hundred dollars to his medical attendant! On the night of the fracas he had won all this back and some fifty dollars besides, and the doctor refused to pay.

"Well," I said, "you know this is very wrong, and I cannot allow knives to be used. What business had you to take the major's carving-knife?"

He explained that it happened to have been lying handy, and promised to be an effective means of persuasion, but he would not undertake not to repeat the attack unless the doctor paid him, in which case he was prepared to let bygones be bygones. He was a first-rate servant and I was anxious not to lose him, so I said I would think the matter over, warning him that he was liable to a very severe sentence if tried by court martial. He came to me on the following day, beaming with joy, and said he had been paid in full, as he had told his medical adviser that he would surely kill him unless he should settle promptly! Some time afterwards I asked whether he had changed his doctor, and he said no, the latter had quite understood the grievance, and they were again very good friends.

Major Douglas-Hamilton's name should also be mentioned in another connexion. He was a first-rate officer, but was nearing the age when he would have to be compulsorily retired as a major under the age clause. I did my best to get him specially promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, which would have kept him on the active list, but the War Office refused my application, and he was placed on retired pay shortly afterwards; devoted as he was to his profession, this nearly broke his heart. Then came the Great War, when he raised a battalion of his old regiment. In one of those desperate battles he had at last only about fifty men remaining,

but the gallant fellow charged over and over again until he was killed. His services had been so valuable that they were accorded the extremely rare distinction of the posthumous Victoria Cross, which King George presented personally to the hero's widow as an enduring mark of the admiration which the War Office had come to feel for him.

When Mrs. Waters was travelling to Peking on the occasion of her forthcoming presentation to the Empress Dowager, she wanted to get something out of her dressing-bag in the train, when it was discovered that her Scottish maid had locked it and left the key behind in Tientsin. This was very awkward, for there was not time to have it sent, as the audience was fixed for the following forenoon, and passenger trains did not circulate at night.

Number One was then called into council, as we thought he might have some suggestion to make, although this was not likely to be the case, for the lock was a patent one of such skilful manufacture that it was guaranteed to be absolutely thief-proof. When the problem was explained to him the boy said he could not open the bag at the moment, but would do so in the morning; this was in the evening, when we were close to Peking.

On the following morning Number One appeared at my wife's bedside with the bag, which he presented to her with a self-satisfied smile. She pressed the lock, and lo! it flew open, nor was it damaged in the slightest degree; so much for patent locks in China.

It is improbable that our domestics were above the average of those to be found in the most important establishments of the British mercantile community, for the soldiers were after all birds of passage, while the others were permanent residents. The servants could be obstinate enough when it suited them, and were then the finest type of passive resisters one could imagine; a strict order might be issued, but was certain to be disobeyed if the Chinese believed themselves to be in the right, and a threat of punishment had no effect whatever.

We had invited two prominent British citizens to dine quietly and play bridge afterwards. Our usual custom

was for the head cook to submit his proposed menu in the morning, when it would be altered if this was considered necessary. On this occasion Mrs. Waters wished the dinner to be something particularly tempting, as one of the guests was a gourmet, and she selected an appropriate bill of fare. We went into dinner, when the soup seemed to consist of the water in which vegetables had been cooked ; neither of us said anything, as nothing could be done, and we hoped that the other courses would make up to some extent for the unfortunate incident. The fish tasted like what I imagine a dish-cloth should taste, and looked the part ; there was no entrée, an ancient rooster followed the fish, and then was succeeded by a wet and half-cooked rice pudding.

There was really nothing fit to eat, and we apologized to our guests, who took the contretemps most handsomely, kindly promising to come again a few evenings later, and they were assured that ample amends should be made. When they had left my wife sent for Number One and inquired how he had dared to insult us all, and make me lose all my "face." He was quite unperturbed, and merely explained that the cook and he had thought the menu which had been ordered would not have been good for us ! Mrs. Waters then directed him to have the proper dinner cooked, and taken out to my guard-room, together with some suitable refreshment, and the sergeant in charge thanked her next morning for a magnificent banquet ; so that it was a case of the ill wind which blows nobody any good.

The adjourned dinner took place as arranged ; it was rather better, but not much, than on the first occasion, and the whole business was so extraordinary that we had inquiries made, when the truth came to light. It appeared that our household staff, for some unfathomable reason, disliked one of our guests, and did not approve of his servants, so our people had taken their own way of showing this, and their resolve was evidently immutable.

Old retainers, animated by the best intentions, would occasionally let down the most careful housekeeper. A high British official had arranged a dinner party for some

distinguished foreign visitors, and the Chinese *maitre d'hôtel* begged the hostess to let him select the sweet, as he knew a very good one which should be a pleasant surprise. This turned out to be an exceedingly solid suet pudding served with . . . treacle. Describing the scene afterwards to my wife, she said: "My eyes popped, and my jaw dropped, at the horrid sight," while simultaneously she was fascinated as the "butler," with great dignity, poured the sticky stuff from a black beer-bottle, with a red label on it, onto each plate in turn; she could not, however, help admiring the neat dexterity with which, by a twist of the wrist, he stopped the turgid fluid flow at exactly the right moment without spilling a drop.

In my time Young China was only beginning to evolve, and the Chinese generally were intensely conservative, as was shown by their ancestor-worship, their respect for age, their steadfast adherence to worn-out habits, and perhaps by their everlasting patience in a state of life which left the overwhelming mass of the population at the best of times on the border of starvation. Occasionally, when the exactions of the authorities became utterly unbearable, there would be local revolts, when unspeakable atrocities were committed, but by degrees things settled down again into their former exhausting groove. As a race does not quickly unlearn its customs, it seems tolerably certain that it must take a long time for such a remarkably conservative people to free themselves from the shackles and vanity imposed by age-long tradition.

The Chinese have certainly some admirable qualities; besides risking their lives for you for a trifling matter they would suffer unflinchingly, in hospitals and dispensaries, extreme pain which a white man could scarcely bear the thought of; they had outgrown "nerves" if they ever had any, and this is a factor to be reckoned with. They were also blessed with a most cheerful disposition, and laughed where the Westerner would weep; an intensely interesting, and sometimes extraordinarily aggravating race.

## CHAPTER XXIV

EVERYBODY has heard of the looting which took place after the Boxers had been suppressed ; Dr. Morrison told me a good deal about it. The things that were taken were supposed to be pooled and were then sold by auction ; many treasures were thus purchased for a song, and resold afterwards for very big sums ; some people indeed made fortunes in this way. There were, however, persons who looted on their own account, and one officer, I heard, emptied his ammunition wagons and refilled them with silver ingots, thereby putting himself beyond the reach of want.

The Japanese were very efficient in discovering hidden treasure, as shall be seen from the following episode. Some British officers had taken possession of a substantial Chinese residence, and Japanese colleagues had done the same with another house. Presently they went to our people and begged them to exchange dwellings, pointing out that the one in which our officers had quartered themselves was not worthy of such great men, and the other, being much larger and better furnished, was the place for them, while the Japanese, accustomed to roughing it, would be quite content with the smaller house. This thoughtfulness was much appreciated, and the exchange was duly carried out ; our oriental allies had swept their former residence bare of everything really valuable, and then wished to explore new ground, which they did, it was learnt, with great success, for they knew where to look for loot, whereas our officers were babes in this respect as compared with the Japanese !

The question of concession-hunting was a much more important one. Jordan told me that the Great Powers were, for the time being, on the " peaceful penetration "

tack, and as the Chinese Government was aware of this it concluded all sorts of agreements at Peking, and then excused their non-fulfilment on the ground that the provincial Governors-General refused to allow them to be carried out, and sufficient pressure could not be brought to bear upon them to enforce obedience.

The Minister told me that the concession-hunting had assumed really scandalous proportions, and that he frequently received cablegrams, sent at the public expense and costing thousands of pounds annually, on behalf of persons inquiring how their concession affairs were progressing, sometimes when he had had no previous knowledge of them, although he should have been the first to be consulted. Speaking merely as an outsider entirely ignorant of the subject, I remarked once that this sort of thing must, it seemed to me, lead to trouble, and Jordan replied, "It is bound to *end* in trouble," a prediction which has since been abundantly verified. The Chinese are not fools, and he did not agree with the view of the Foreign Office that China was about to westernize her customs and business methods for the benefit of foreigners.

The usual custom in Tientsin was for the various foreign commanders and consuls to receive their nationals on the birthday of their respective Sovereigns or Presidents, and champagne flowed copiously at these gatherings, which took place in the forenoon. King Edward's birthday happened shortly after my arrival, when my residence was not in a fit state to receive more than a very few people at one time, so I dispensed with the refreshment in my first year, and nobody stayed more than a minute or two.

My wife and little son joined me at the end of March 1907, a delightful meeting for all of us; she had seen much more of China than I ever did, for they travelled from Shanghai up the Yangtze-kiang to Hankow, and thence by rail to Peking and Tientsin; this part of their journey was most interesting, for the train ran only in the daytime, and amongst other sights they saw some of the cave-dwellers—relics, I suppose, of prehistoric days.

The West Kents were relieved soon after my arrival

by the Middlesex regiment ; the Londoners were very humorous, and they were followed by another splendid battalion, the Cameron Highlanders, whose successors were the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, a magnificent body of men. Our little boy saw a good deal of them all, as he was in the habit of conversing with the guard at my residence, and my wife asked the sergeant once if he was likely to pick up some rather strong language. "Oh, never," was the reply ; "a man would never think of using bad language before a child." I believe this was always true in the case of every regiment ; the men were real Nature's gentlemen, and unsurpassable in every respect.

It had occurred to me that it would be a good thing to introduce an innovation for the British troops in the summer months by sending them into camp, about one half at a time, near Shan-Hai-Kuan, on the sea-shore, and it met with the entire approval of everybody concerned. Nor is this to be wondered at ; Tientsin from May to September was very hot, there was then little that the men could do there, and the dulness was bad for them, so I transferred my Head-quarters to the Great Wall of China in May. We lived in tents, while the troops were housed either in some wooden huts, which the Governor-General had kindly lent me, or in tents. They had lots of sea-bathing, and were able to carry on their training.

One day a big German cruiser anchored about three miles off the shore ; she proved to be the *Fürst Bismarck*, and the flagship of Admiral Koerper, an old friend of mine who had been for several years naval attaché in London ; he had come up to Shan-Hai-Kuan in order to pay me a visit. He entertained us royally on board, and we had the privilege of listening to a delightful concert given by his string band.

We decided to celebrate the first of King Edward's birthdays after Mrs. Waters's arrival by giving a ball in the Gordon Hall to about a couple of hundred people instead of my receiving only men in the morning ; this was a new departure and proved to be really a great success. The supper problem had caused much anxious thought ;



the custom at the two subscription balls, on St. George's day and St. Andrew's Day was for it to be let out to contract to a Chinese, and my wife believed she could improve on this plan.

Our head cook threw himself heartily into her scheme, especially as it would cause the contractor, his rival, to "lose face," and for some days prior to November 9 he had enlisted the services of other cooks, friends of his, who worked hard at night. Our Number One also requisitioned a horde of footmen to help him, and he told my wife afterwards, when she asked him about paying all the helpers, that this would hurt their feelings, as they were proud to have been of service; the only exception was in the case of the man in charge of the wine, who was allowed to receive a small present.

The subscription ball on St. Andrew's night was one of the great social events of the year, and was got up by the Scottish community. On one occasion the band of the 47th Sikhs—a very good one under a Dutch band-master—had been engaged, and the regiment also had pipers. It had been arranged that a procession should be formed in the ball-room before going in to supper, and Mrs. Waters was asked to head it in company with the chairman of the committee, who was garbed in a very decorously long kilt, which he only wore on an occasion like this. Everybody was to walk once round the room, and then go out to the supper apartment; but I suppose that exact instructions had not been given to the pipers, who were leading the way, for they marched solemnly round and round the room and refused to stop until they were, I think, out of breath!

In Chapter XXIII it was mentioned that when one concluded a bargain with a Chinese I always found that he carried it out faithfully, but the following episode shows that he might even go beyond it. A gang foreman in our employment had got into some trouble in the native city, and was said to have behaved in a most improper manner towards the Chinese magistrate in the street. The Governor-General lodged a complaint and began, as usual, by asking that he should be handed over; he did not

expect the request to be complied with, but the formula was persisted in just to keep the claim alive. When this was refused I asked for details, and it appeared that our foreman was the injured party; he was a very quiet, steady man, and owned some house property in the city, and a relative, who was a friend of the magistrate's, had induced the latter to seize two houses on some pretext or other. The magistrate and the foreman had met in the street, and words, no doubt angry and offensive ones, had passed between the pair; but the whole affair had arisen owing to the conduct of the representative of the law, who wanted to "squeeze" the owner.

I informed the Governor-General of the facts, told him that my man, far from committing any offence, had suffered substantial injury, and added I was sure his Excellency would agree with me, and have the house property returned to its owner. We had a long correspondence on the subject, and eventually, much to my surprise, he gave way even as regarded the houses; if he had refused my request there was no way by which I could compel him to grant it in his own fastness, for I could not have seized and guarded the property indefinitely. He knew this quite as well as I did, but he not only acceded to my request, but went a great deal further.

Shortly after the amicable settlement had been reached I was asked if I would receive the magistrate, and an appointment was made. He was shown into my room together with two retainers who were carrying boxes of some size, and it was then explained that the Governor-General was so grateful for the manner in which I had handled the affair, that he hoped I would do him the honour of accepting the two accompanying vases of old Peking cloisonné as a slight mark of his appreciation; perhaps his Excellency owed the magistrate a grudge, and the latter may have been the real donor!

The situation was awkward, for British officials were not supposed to accept presents, but the Governor-General at any rate would have been very much hurt if the gift had been returned. I therefore decided at once to accept it, for after all he had come round entirely to my way of

thinking ; had it been otherwise, I would not have taken the vases, nor would he have sent them. An expert at the British Museum told me once that they are very good.

Before Yuan-Shi-kai was translated to Peking he sent my wife some beautiful Chinese embroideries. It was possible now and again to pick up good things at a low price, but after 1900 values had risen enormously, and very bad stuff cost a lot to buy. This was due to the fact that tourists were usually in a hurry and bought trash, for which they paid anything that was asked ; nor did foreign merchants spend any time in haggling. The representative of a great Paris house came to Peking in my time, and was remonstrated with for the exorbitant prices which he paid ; his answer was that his time was very limited, and besides, he said, he could get anything he liked to ask in Paris, as nobody there could tell good Chinese things from bad.

In contrast with the story about the Chinese magistrate and the foreman of coolies, another may be told concerning a British regiment. A gentleman arrived one day in Tientsin from Australia, and found an old friend, Private Wilkins, in the ranks of the Middlesex, so he decided to give some of the men a treat, and invited a party of them to a midday feast, after which he hired a four-in-hand brake to take them for a drive. The European portion of Tientsin was parcelled out into Concessions, which merged into one another, and each Consul-General kept a jealous watch over his privileges, every municipality having its own Chinese police under a foreign superintendent.

On the day of the party the Australian was driving along the bank of the filthy Pei-ho, and innocently crossed the border line into French territory, where the road was temporarily closed to wheeled traffic. He did not notice this, as only a very small portion of it was up and there was plenty of room for the brake, but a French police inspector dashed at the leaders' heads, startled them, and the whole party had a narrow escape of being thrown into the river, where they might easily have been drowned.

A heated argument, unintelligible to either side, arose, the inspector whistled for his Chinese police, and a gallant Middlesex man, unable to make the son of Gaul under-

stand that he should let go of the horses, remembered that he had that thirst-cooling vegetable, a tomato, in his pocket. He flung it full in the Frenchman's face, and as it happened to be over-ripe he made a dreadful mess of the job; the physical damage was negligible, but the uniform had been insulted.

A battle royal ensued; our men had nothing but their fists, whereas the Chinese police, who were in vastly superior numbers, had bludgeons; we were beaten, but by no means disgraced, for the Middlesex put in some good work before they were all laid out. The first I heard of the affair was from an angry letter written to me by the French Consul-General, the substance of which was that he expected me to have the tomato man sentenced to a long term of penal servitude for having struck and insulted his inspector.

It was, of course, most desirable that rows should be avoided and offenders punished, but the crime was not so heinous in British as in French eyes; moreover, the Chinese had been savagely brutal, some of our men having to be detained in hospital, and it occurred to me that the police inspector was deserving of at least some punishment for not having prevented this maltreatment.

I therefore called upon the Consul-General, who, from a fancied resemblance to the great Napoleon, was fond of assuming Napoleonic attitudes, and after expressing my heartfelt regrets for the unfortunate fracas I inquired what he proposed to do to his man. This surprised him, for in his opinion the British alone were in fault, but I said that punishment could not be inflicted on one side only, and he eventually suggested that the slate should be wiped clean; this was very handsome of him, and so the matter ended happily as between England and France.

I had had inquiries made, and was curious to hear what the tomato thrower had to say about the affair, so when he had recovered sufficiently to be discharged to light duty from hospital, he was ushered into my presence. I told him to give me his version of what had occurred, which was substantially the same as the one I had already heard, but I said there was also a report that he had knocked the

inspector down after getting out of the brake. The man, who spoke with a lisp and had a cockney accent, replied :

" No, thir, I didn't knock 'im down ; I wath goin' to knock 'im down when thomebody bludgeoned me from be'ind, an' I wath knocked down inthenthible mythelf, thir, tho I couldn't knock 'im down, thir, ath I meant to do, thir."

" Well," I said, " how dared you fling a worn-out tomato, or any tomato, at a French official's face ? "

" You thee, thir, it wath like thith, thir ; the 'ortheth wath plungin' an' I thought we'd all be in the river, an' 'e wouldn't let go of their 'eadth when I called to 'im, tho I thought the betht thin' to do wath to make 'im let go, thir, which 'e then did, thir, an' it wath reely a very thoft tomato, thir ! "

He promised not to carry tomatoes again, or at any rate to use them only for their proper purpose, and was very much relieved to hear that a general amnesty had been proclaimed.

Just as these lines were written a new fact was brought to my notice which explains why the French Consul-General was so justly furious. It appears that in France the throwing of tomatoes, at elections for instance, is synonymous with flinging rotten eggs in this country ; to cast even a ripe one is an unpardonable insult, but of course Private Wilkins was not aware of this.

All the Indian regiments were also very well behaved, although they and the Chinese were antipathetic to each other ; but an extraordinary occurrence happened once. We had a small post guarding a large store situated in the German Concession, and close by was a Chinese village. Just before my arrival in Tientsin a shop-keeper had complained that some Indian soldiers had robbed him, and inquiry showed that the complaint was well founded, but there was no corroborative evidence, while the other side all vowed that they had been asleep, except the sentry. My predecessor had minuted the documents in the case with the remark that it was very unsatisfactory, as a court martial would almost certainly not convict, although there was no doubt about the soldiers' guilt.

The same thing happened again during my term of command, and the same regiment was concerned ; it was no doubt believed that the result would be similar, and it was, in so far that it would have done more harm than good to try men with no prospect of a conviction. There was, however, another weapon in my armoury which the marauders had not thought of. Indian regiments in North China were given special allowances in meat rations, and in other ways, on account of the severity of the climate in winter.

Inquiry into the complaint brought forth absolute denial of anything improper having occurred ; winter was at hand, so I gave a time limit of forty-eight hours in which the offenders were to give themselves up ; otherwise the regiment should be sent to a desolate spot where it should have leisure, during the bitter cold, to reflect, but without the meat ration by which great store was laid. This gave the battalion ample time in which to discuss the matter and decide it for itself ; what moral pressure was brought to bear I never, of course, heard ; protestations of innocence were sent to my office from time to time, but when the order for the move was issued, the guilty ones gave themselves up. The Chinese was compensated (they were the same sepoys in each case) for both robberies, and a third one never took place. My conviction had been that no Chinese would have dared to bring a false charge of this nature against our troops.

It is wonderful how men stick together in Indian regiments. One morning a sepoy shot and killed another—it was believed owing to some family or tribal quarrel—and then tried to shoot himself, but only inflicted a dangerous wound instead. The barrack-room was full of men at the time, and every man in the regiment must have known who had committed the crime, but not one of them would come forward to give evidence.

The wounded man was taken to hospital, where he remained for some months while being nursed back to health to await trial for murder ; he was quite a youngster, and it seemed rather horrible that he should be so tenderly cared for in order to suffer death at the hands of the law.

A conviction seemed an absolute certainty, for the rifle, and the two cartridges which had been fired, belonged to the killer. The man's commanding officer was greatly distressed, the more so at the thought of the criminal being hanged, but when I told him I should certainly change a sentence of hanging to one by shooting, he said that, according to the Indian Army Articles of War, I had no power to do this, but I meant to do it all the same.

The man was tried in due course, and I suppose the members of the court martial felt that it would be inappropriate to sentence him to death in the circumstances, after the mental torture which he had probably undergone, and he was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation to the Andaman Islands, the Dartmoor of India. I was heartily glad, and a few months afterwards the authorities in that country inquired whether I had any objection to the term being curtailed by three months in the event of the prisoner being of good behaviour. The possible remission seemed to be a very short one.

Everybody will remember that a wave of discontent had spread over India several years before the Great War broke out, but it surprised me to learn that the agitators for reforms—and worse—had dispatched emissaries as well as letters as far afield as North China.

An English editor in Tientsin, a man of strong liberal tendencies, told me one day that a young Indian, by name Verma, had been to ask for his assistance in spreading sedition among the Indian regiments in the command. Inquiries were set on foot quietly, and it appeared that the young gentleman had come north from Shanghai and had been living in the Indian lines. Immediately afterwards I received a communication from India to the effect that some of the Indian officers in North China had been sending money to Lalla Lajpat Rai; this had come out owing to the fact that the last instalment dispatched to him had reached its address after Mr. Rai had been sentenced to a term of imprisonment, so the letter had been opened and read by the authorities.

It seemed to me the best thing to do was to get Mr. Verma out of China as quickly as possible, but my powers

of course only extended to keeping undesirables out of our military cantonments, and it was by no means certain that the British civil authorities could deport him; they certainly could not do this if he went to live in territory under Chinese jurisdiction. Hearing of Verma's whereabouts, I issued instructions that he was to be seized wherever he should be found, and was to be brought to Tientsin, where he would be flogged. He quickly got wind of this and did exactly what I hoped he would do, namely, took flight at once to Japan, and he never troubled us again. Some months later, however, I read in an English newspaper, published in India, that his activities there had earned him a term of several years' transportation to the Andaman Islands.

This occurred just at the time when there was a heated discussion going on in Parliament about flogging in India for certain offences, and Lord Morley, while expressing his detestation of such a mode of punishment, said he did not quite see his way to forbidding its use altogether. My object, of course, was to frighten Verma out of China; to have him flogged was the last thing I wanted, for the man was not a camp follower and was not therefore liable to be dealt with in this manner; he would have been flogged, however, if he had risked capture, and no doubt I would have been promptly superseded; indeed I did not see how my superiors in London could have acted otherwise, so my bluff was a lucky one.

The Indian officers concerned with the subscriptions for the freedom of India received a thorough fright; I was not going to try them by court martial unless a conviction for sedition should be almost certain. A perusal of the *Indian Army Regulations* seemed clearly to bring the case within their purview, but I consulted the senior officers of their regiment before taking any action. They were men of great experience as regarded Indian soldiers, and were absolutely convinced that the suspected officers were thoroughly loyal; they may have been unconsciously influenced to some extent by the very proper pride which their subordinates had inspired in them. Their opinion was that no court martial would convict,



although the evidence pointed to a different conclusion, and as some members of the court must have been taken from the Indian army the best thing to do was to frighten the Indians concerned ; this was not a difficult task, for they were much taken aback when confronted with their own letters.

The whole business shows how far-reaching were the efforts of the Indian reformers to gain their ends, but they knew perfectly well that their conduct concerning troops in a distant land was criminal.

Another sign of self-determination—although the expression had not been coined, I believe, twenty years ago—also showed itself. This time it was the *dhooly* bearers of an Indian regiment who refused duty on the ground that the British medical officer, Captain Needham, under whose command they were, had been giving them work which was not strictly connected with their professional duties ; he was blessed with a fertile brain, spoke very sympathetically to the malcontents, and promised that for the future they should carry the litters for the sick and do nothing else.

Remarking that there was no time like the present—the weather was nice and hot—he sent them to fetch the cumbrous *dhoolies*, ordered the heaviest among the men to lie down in them, and then set the procession in motion. Round and round the barrack square he marched them until they were about to drop from exhaustion, when the bearers were relieved by those who had been reposing in the litters, and the process was repeated. Captain Needham, who has since deservedly risen to high office, dismissed them after a considerable time had been spent in this exercise, and told them the performance should be repeated in the afternoon. This was not, however, necessary, for a deputation besought him to have mercy upon them, promising never again to question his edicts !

The most unlikely cause may sometimes create a difficult situation. On one very hot day we were at luncheon in our marquee at Shan-Hai-Kuan when my wife noticed some defaulters who were weeding the ground near our camp ; she said she could not bear to think of the poor

Highlanders working in the sun, and sent some cooling refreshment to them. On the following day there was an increase in the number so employed, so more refreshment was required, while some of the good boys were seen sitting on the Great Wall watching their comrades with thirsty eyes; on the third day there was a still further increase in the number of weeders, and my wife's stock of supplies was getting rather low.

In the course of the afternoon an officer called upon her, when she remarked that it was very odd there should suddenly be so many defaulters in such an extremely well-behaved regiment. It then appeared that he had come expressly to request her to discontinue the practice of entertaining them, as the whole battalion would otherwise commit some petty offence in order to qualify for defaulters' work in the circumstances! She thought the demand cruel, but was reluctantly obliged to accede to it.

From time to time there were international games and sports, which brought the occupying troops together, when each nation won its share of the events; the French had a particularly strong tug-of-war team, whose colours were only lowered once, by the Cameron Highlanders after a desperate struggle. The French also had a very strong comedy company, the women's parts being taken by men dressed in female clothes; we were invited once officially to a performance, and laughed till we cried. The French general, Sucillon, told us that the "actresses" were quite as difficult to manage as were many whose profession was the stage; they threw themselves with such zeal into their parts that they became "temperamental."

An unintentionally comic touch was given to the proceedings on this occasion. When we arrived and were being ushered to our seats the band struck up *God Save the King*; we remained standing, of course, but when the air had been played through, the musicians recommenced; we didn't know what to do, and got hotter and hotter and redder and redder, feeling that we could not sit down although the end was not in sight as long as we remained on our feet. At last we looked at each other

and subsided into our chairs, but a considerable time elapsed before we felt cool again ; with us, the National Anthem is only played through for the Sovereign, and the Queen.

On one side the British Concession at Tientsin adjoined that of the Germans, who had allowed the British forces to occupy some buildings in their area as storehouses after the Boxer rising was over. The German consul told me one day that he would be glad to have these warehouses handed back to him, as some of his own merchants required more accommodation, and it was intended to institute a building policy and effect improvements on a considerable scale ; but he said there was no immediate hurry.

The request was a reasonable one, and besides the Germans were quite within their rights ; there was, however, some point connected with the affair which necessitated my referring the question to the Minister at Peking, so that he could consult the Foreign Office. I do not know what passed between them, but instructions were given to me to cause as much delay as possible on the ground that "nothing should be done which might help German trade in China." I informed the German consul that it would be very inconvenient for us to evacuate their land owing to the great difficulty in procuring other accommodation elsewhere except by undertaking costly building operations. If he had insisted, we had not a leg to stand on, but he was very nice about the matter, and we remained in occupation until after my departure from China at any rate.



**"THE FIRST GATE" IN THE GREAT WALL, WHICH IS ALSO THE  
SOUTH GATE OF SHAN-HAI-KUAN**



**THE AUTHOR AT THE KING'S BIRTHDAY PARADE, TIENTSIN  
November 1906**



## CHAPTER XXV

MANY American, British, and Canadian missionaries, who came to Tientsin occasionally from the interior, told us that China was already, in 1909, changing rapidly, and I imagine that these gentlemen and their wives must have had better opportunities than anybody else for gauging the signs of the times. There were of course innumerable cross-currents, but the Progressives were said to be making headway with a view to enhancing the status of China to the detriment of the foreigner.

Missionaries have been accused of meddling in political matters and of making improper use of their position. Their knowledge of the people and of their language gave them, of course, great advantages and opportunities, but we never heard it suggested that the episcopalian or nonconformist missionaries were guilty of the charge. The Roman Catholic clergy, however, had certain special privileges which the other bodies had refused to share when they were offered to them, and there were cases where these political prerogatives were employed to further the material interests of catholic converts, and the Chinese naturally resented this, which paved the way for trouble when a favourable opportunity should present itself. The Roman privileges had been extracted by the French Government, but the devotion and self-sacrifice of the missionaries themselves were not to be surpassed anywhere.

More than twenty years ago many Chinese wished to adopt certain Western methods to the use of their own country in order to place China on at least an equal footing with other Powers; they appreciated the great position which this plan had gained for Japan, and desired to follow her example with the same object in view. In my

time the reactionaries were too strong for the reformers, but both had this in common that they regarded the Westerner as a diabolically clever and unscrupulous hypocrite, whom, however, they despised even before 1914.

The Emperor, Kwang Hsu, had made a valiant effort in the direction of reform, but was quickly crushed by the retrograde Empress Dowager. Yuan-Shi-kai was, as already mentioned in Chapter XXIII, another great reformer, but he had to move warily, and even so fell into disgrace, being fortunate to keep his head on his shoulders. We also became acquainted with some of the other progressive citizens, and were glad of the opportunity.

One day my wife went to see a hospital and nursing home in the Chinese city of Tientsin; it had been started by a Chinese lady, Dr. Kin, and she wrote:

"She is the most charming lady you could wish to see; she was educated in America,<sup>1</sup> speaks English perfectly, and dresses in neat Chinese clothes. Everything is thoroughly clean and well kept. She trains girls to go out as nurses, and some of them do well; the Chinese are glad to get them, especially for maternity cases. The natives, like some other people, prefer their medicine to be 'tasty,' and this is one of their prescriptions as translated by an English doctor here.

"One small frog, 4 locusts, 8 beetles, 1 lizard, 1 earwig, 1 scorpion, 20 grasshoppers, and 2 centipedes. Boil together in enough water to weigh half a catty (2-3 lb.) and drink at one dose.

"As you can see from the foregoing, this is only a cooling summer drink! The doctor told me that most of the ingredients of medicines are too loathsome to be mentioned, but are in accordance with the saying of the Sage, Meng: 'If medicine do not raise commotion in the patient, his disease will not be cured by it.'"

"In some parts of China doctors are paid by their clients so long as the latter enjoy good health; when they fall ill, however, payments cease until the patient

<sup>1</sup> Chinese educated abroad usually felt happier in the United States than in England, so I was informed by some who had experience of both countries.

<sup>2</sup> In some English villages a cooked mouse is still given as a specific for whooping-cough.

recovers, the idea being that the medicine man shall use his best endeavours to effect this result ; if the patient dies the doctor gets nothing more.

“ We had a real Chinese luncheon with Dr. Kin, clean and well served, but I don't like the food much ; it is too flavoursome, and it is not appetizing when everyone dips his own chopsticks into the bowls, and helps not only himself but others to titbits.

“ We saw Sir Cecil (Clementi-Smith) on his way home from the Opium Conference. One wonders how our people can be hypocrites enough to preach against opium when they are introducing cigarettes and drink into the country with both hands. They say the former is already a crying evil ; I saw in a missionary hospital last week a Chinese girl blind from neuritis in her eyes brought on by cigarettes. They are so cheap here that you can buy a hundred for 3½d., and I forget how many million packets of five each were given away last year in order to get them known. It is said that the papers are soaked in opium to add to the harm they do. Of course it is a splendid trade, but why preach against opium if one is going to help on another vice instead ? Another growing evil is patent medicines. The women and children take more readily to these cigarettes, drink, and patent medicines, than anyone. A lady doctor told me she is always offered cigarettes by the women now instead of the old water pipe, and horrible wine which has been left at the door by some traveller in sample bottles.”

By the early part of 1909 the Japanese had largely reduced their force in Tientsin, and were anxious that we should follow their example. It was known that the Germans intended shortly to withdraw their detachment from that place, and our oriental Ally thought it would create a good impression in China if we did the same ; but we were differently situated. Japan could convey troops to Tientsin from Mukden in a few hours' time, and she also had thousands of reservists living in the country ; Germany was close at hand at Tsingtao, and so was France in Indo-China, whereas India was the nearest land whence our soldiers could be dispatched.

Nothing came of the idea, and the Germans had a great send-off in March ; our massed bands, sent by their



commanding officers, played *Die Wacht am Rhein*, which was very impressive, and crowds of our men went of their own accord to cheer them on their way ; the British regiments had always fraternized with their Teutonic colleagues. Once, when we were dining with Major von Barfus, the German commander, and his sister, a torchlight tattoo had been arranged for us. The Japanese had sent their men away in driblets ; in fact, we used not to hear of their departure until after they had gone. It was a pity that the French were quartered so far away from the Concessions, for intimacy suffered in consequence, and another difficulty was that of language, whereas somehow our men and the Germans managed to understand one another ; this was especially the case with the Cameron Highlanders, who were all Scots, except the band, while several Teutons knew English.

The Empress Dowager and the Emperor Kwang Hsu died within a few hours of each other in November 1908, and things had settled down quietly apparently under a reactionary Prince Regent, the new Sovereign being a child whose mother, the young Empress Dowager, was no reformer. When Kwang Hsu's death became known some of the Chinese troops mutinied, and one battalion massacred all its officers ; but order was soon re-established.

The funeral of the Empress Dowager was not to take place until twelve months after her death, but that of the Emperor was fixed for a much earlier date, namely May 1, 1909. It was the first occasion on which foreigners were to be allowed to see the procession, and I took a party from Tientsin in order to view it. My chief staff officer, Major Daniell, had been succeeded by Major (now Brigadier-General) M. Willoughby of the Indian Cavalry, and when he was appointed military attaché at Peking, Major (now Brigadier-General) C. P. Higginson of the Shropshire Light Infantry took his place, and attended the funeral. Three more gifted staff officers could not have been found anywhere, and all three rendered distinguished service in the Great War ; poor Daniell was soon killed, and Higginson lost a leg in the first month ; otherwise he must have risen to very high command ; Willoughby

was afterwards employed on a very delicate politico-military task for which he was very inadequately rewarded. Captain Robin Campbell, of the Cameron Highlanders, was my provost-marshal and a first-rate officer.

Our journey was very comfortable; my party, with my mounted infantry escort, and servants, being a large one, we were given a special train. Stands had been erected outside the Imperial City, and my wife's description is far better than anything I could have written.

"The whole thing was inexpressibly sad to me. You know the Chinese have no sense of order or sentiment, and although the whole affair was a pageant of glorious colour and curious crudeness it was shabby in the extreme. There was a long procession of grubby men carrying umbrellas and various Chinese symbols, and four yellow chairs containing the really fine wreaths, mostly silver ones, presented by the different nations.

"One very pretty thing was the way some men threw 'cash' (paper money) into the air, and some of it flew right up out of sight for the dead Emperor's use in heaven. Bathos, when a small boy, in one of the imperial silk dressing-gowns, came scrambling with a bag, and picked up what he could off the ground. The catafalque was lovely, huge, and a mass of delicate embroidery. Before the procession started the Prince Regent made the Sacrificial Offering in front of it; this consisted of three libations of wine; one of the Imperial Princes filled a cup, which the Regent raised towards Heaven, and then poured it on the earth, the operation being thrice repeated.

"I couldn't help wondering if anyone, even his wife, was regretting poor Kwang Hsu; perhaps in some forgotten corner of the palace there may linger some old 'Nanny' who was grieving for him as he was lumbered along on his last lonely journey.

"The funeral was put out to contract at some huge sum, so beggars were employed as bearers, being cheap, I suppose, and a Mandarin's funeral is far more showy; it was a huge procession. Banner-men on the sorriest of ponies, and crowds on foot keeping no order.

"The funeral has been made the occasion of advertising the 'Entente Cordiale' very effectively, *and* I may add, free of expense! Instead of the British and French

legations each sending its own wreath, they clubbed together and sent only one, a big, silver thing, about two feet in diameter."

My wife wrote home on December 18, 1909 :

"We hear that the Chinese Government is in a very rotten condition, and they seem to think there may be a palace revolution at any time; Manchurian affairs are in a terrible state, and the Japanese are grasping more and more every day.

"It is curious how the feeling of independence is passing over the whole world, Turkey, Persia, and now China. The last has a short way with any able and enlightened man she may have in a prominent position; she just sacks him, and no questions asked or answered! So we have lost our splendid Viceroys, Yuan-Shi-kai and Tuan Feng, and the intermediate one, Yang-Shi-Hsiang, less able but a good man, was going to be hounded out, but died, probably of ——? He was one of Yuan's men.

"Tuan Feng was dining with Sir John Jordan one night, and the next morning went to take his leave at the palace, but found himself shut out, and knew that he was disgraced, and absolutely *no* good reason given. The Chinese are very sorry, for though he was a Manchu he was such a good man; he was much beloved even in the short time he has been here; a just man, they say, and not a grasping money-maker as so many of them are."

The great Empress Dowager was buried in November 1909, and it had occurred to Tuan to have some photographs taken of the funeral as a record for future generations—a very sensible idea. It was not, however, favourably received, and to make matters worse Tuan had happened to cross the imperial route. This was the ostensible ground for his disgrace, the real one being undoubtedly his vision as a capable reformer; his official button, his peacock's feather, everything was taken from him, and the young Empress Dowager, the mother of the child Emperor so soon to be deposed, was believed to be at the bottom of the affair.

My wife and I wished to pay farewell visits to Tuan and his wife; he accepted the proposal gratefully, but on

reconsideration he told me that it would be better for him if we did not come. As in the case of his two predecessors, some more or less thorny questions concerning Chinese in our employment arose sometimes, but we invariably found a solution acceptable to both sides. Service with us was very popular; a notice was issued one day that we required about five hundred coolies at the standard rate of wages, and on the following morning several thousand applicants appeared.

Conversations between Tuan and myself were as usual carried on through an interpreter, but the Chinese were very easy to get on with. The first time that I met Tuan we had a long talk; he said he was an Egyptologist, and deeply interested in the land of the Pharaohs, believing that there was some far-off link connecting the hieroglyphics of Egypt with Chinese "characters." He was subsequently beheaded.

It was only a few weeks before Tuan was disgraced that Mrs. Waters was invited by his wife to take tea with her, so she set out accompanied by Mrs. Higginson, and our son, then aged ten, under escort of a party of mounted infantry in scarlet. Mandarin Tsai came to meet her at our house, and he acted as interpreter. They drove through several courtyards to the Yamen, and her letter goes on to say:

"Imagine my feelings when a huge Guard of Honour and band appeared, and presented arms! I don't suppose many such humble mortals as myself have ever had such an honour accorded to them. A second interpreter was also present, and our hostess is, of course, a Manchu lady, and of high degree. She has a narrow face, with bulging eyes, and a pouting mouth, just like the ladies one sees on the old scrolls, and wore the wide Manchu headdress; there were clogs on her feet, which were very small and neat, but not bound (as she is a Manchu).

"We sat and talked for some time, and then the quaintest baby was brought in, a granddaughter nine months old; it was dressed in Chinese clothes, a tiny coat, mauve brocade trousers, and orange-coloured shoes, while on its rather fat head was a tiny pink muslin doll's hat of

sailor shape. It looked so odd, and didn't care for us at all, and howled so much that it had to be removed. We then saw several sons and daughters—nephews and nieces they were called, which I take it is a term for the children of secondary wives, but I'm not sure.

"One little girl of twelve is deaf and dumb, and I said she can be taught to speak with her fingers; my hostess then told me that such children can be taught by holding another person's throat so as to feel the vibrations; when I said that this is quite a new idea in England, she replied that it is very old in China, where there are many who are born deaf and dumb.

"We then left the first sort of house where we had been, and walked through the garden, where there were more Guards of Honour, and I was made to walk in front, and didn't know whether to grin, bow, salute, or what, so I did all except salute! It was explained to me that the band could not play, as the Chinese officials are still in mourning for the old Empress Dowager and Emperor. Then we reached another house and found such a spread awaiting us; the room was profusely decorated with flags, chiefly Union Jacks and Chinese, and the table was arranged in European fashion with linen, napkins, silver, and plates, all brand-new.

"There were piles of the loveliest-looking cakes and fruit, but—we began with birds'-nest soup, and oh! it *was* so sweet; then we had lotus-seed soup. Just at that moment the Governor-General appeared in his full official dress together with the fat baby, which was now arrayed in a pink flannelette baby's frock, and a cheap, white, embroidered bonnet with strings flying, while the purple satin trousers and orange shoes peeped from below. Grandpa made such a fuss of her, a real granpy; first she was given tea, and she put all her fingers in the spoon; then dear grandpa, robes and all, ran about with her, her big, fat, moon-face with small black eyes aglow with satisfaction. One couldn't help thinking that 'off with his head' would come just as easily to the old gentleman at any other moment. The nurses ran in and out with tales of how clever the baby girl is, and how headstrong. It was such a topsy-turvy scene: the European-Chinese aspect, the flannelette frock, the Mandarin button, and the peacock's feather; the birds'-nest soup, and the silver teapot with the price ticket, 190 dollars (about £16), all

in our honour. Pat, and especially his eyes, were much admired.

"I forgot to say we had apple-pie, jelly flavoured with whisky, champagne, tea with milk and sugar (the Chinese did not take milk); but alas! we were not offered the lovely cakes.

"It was all most interesting, and evidently everything had been done to show real hospitality. On taking my departure, I was conducted with due ceremony to the courtyard where I found the Guard of Honour again awaiting me; it was composed of Chinese soldiers in European khaki uniforms, while the headdress was a straw hat with the queue rolled up into a bun. The Manchus do not wear it, and it was originally imposed by them as a badge of servitude, but is now a highly treasured ornament.

"I thought that at last I had finished with Guards of Honour, but, after passing through several other courtyards, we arrived at the main entrance, where we found the one which had presented arms to me some minutes previously; they must have been quick to have got round in time, for our way seemed to be the most direct one. Well, it was all most enjoyable and flattering, and I don't suppose I shall be honoured ever again like I was to-day, for our time expires in a few months. It all showed, however, what good terms we are on with the Chinese, although we are in occupation of their land."

A Governor-General lunched with me occasionally, and the description of one such entertainment may be taken as typical of others, the guest this time being Tuan Feng. There was the sharpest contrast between the formality observed by a British Viceroy and a Chinese Governor-General on ceremonial occasions; the former, with his smart and imposing retinue, impressed an onlooker, while the other was surrounded by a curious mixture of tawdry magnificence and squalor. On the other hand the oriental Personage had absolute power of life and death, and an official torturer was literally entitled to the appellation of Lord High Executioner as described by Gilbert and Sullivan, whereas the King's representative administered justice in a different manner. Torture for a crime was not, I believe, supposed to be inflicted unless an accused

had confessed his guilt ; if, however, he should deny it, this was equivalent to calling the magistrate a liar, which rendered the culprit liable to the torment ; the system seemed to resemble that employed by the Spanish Inquisition.

No ladies were present at luncheon, one reason being that the number of British and Chinese guests fully taxed the seating capacity of the dining-room. The Governor-General was preceded by a long and disorderly train of banner-men and spear-men, who had to remain in the road outside the house as the space by the front door was small, and room had to be found there for the Guard of Honour and band. One might see a retainer very elaborately equipped except for his headgear, which consisted sometimes of a much-worn cloth travelling cap ! The black and silver state coach was drawn by a pair of horses, which were always terrified at the sound of the band playing the salute, and much care was necessary to prevent them from dashing through the ranks, about twenty people hanging on to their heads. When his Excellency had descended the horses were taken out, as a Chinese coachman requires a circle of immense radius to be able to turn in the ordinary way.

Sir Hedworth Lambton (now Admiral of the Fleet Sir H. Meux) was staying with us at the time, and Mrs. Waters wrote the following account of the party :

“ Most of our ladies came to see the procession of his Excellency and suite, the usual ragged messengers on rough ponies dashing up as an advance guard. H.E. arrived to the minute at 12.30 to return Sir Hedworth's call, and the Commander-in-Chief with his staff met Tuan at the head of the steps. There were twenty-two at luncheon, including several Chinese officials and Mr. Foley, the general manager of the North China railways, and it was most interesting to be behind the scenes, and see how the Chinese serve a big luncheon. It was so very quietly done, no fuss, noise, or bustle, even in the kitchen, and the servants, especially the head cook, have therefore got ‘ plenty much face,’ for H.E. ate every dish, and called twice for pudding.

“ He managed his knife and fork well, although he had brought chopsticks in case of need. At the conclusion of the meal he made five rumbling noises in his tummy,

and then turning round in his chair spat into the fireplace as a sign of the greatest good will and fellowship. He also had little, hot, damp, towels brought in by one of his retainers with which he wiped his face and forehead about half-way through luncheon. Usually he does not really eat at these official meals, but he certainly did so here, and W. says he made a clean plate each time.

"He went away at a quarter to three; he is such a real gentleman, so courteous and charming; he found out that Sir Hedworth had to catch a train, so he made the most natural excuses to account for leaving early, and was most anxious to go to the station to see the admiral off, but was dissuaded as Sir Hedworth wished to depart quietly in plain clothes.

"Then a quaint thing happened, illustrating the curious Chinese mixture of pomp and go-as-you-please. We saw it as we were at the window overlooking the front steps. When Tuan began to move the Guard of Honour got ready, the front door was flung open, and H.E. commenced to descend the steps; but his state coachman, not expecting such an early departure, had hung his hat on one of the huge carriage-lamps (you should see the state coach !) and then ensconced himself comfortably inside; his legs were stretched on the front seat, and he was smoking a cigarette in safety as the horses had not yet been put to.

"There was some delay before he grasped the situation, when he emerged leisurely, put on his hat, threw away his cigarette, called for the horses, which he helped to put in, and then climbed on to the box; meanwhile his master, quite unperturbed, got inside, the Guard presenting arms until the vehicle lumbered away. This is China."

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Hedworth Meux has been mentioned; he was for two years the Commander-in-Chief on the China station, and we owe a great deal to his kindness. He invited me to attend the annual gunnery practice of his flagship, the *King Alfred*, which was most interesting for an artilleryman like myself, and on another occasion he placed his yacht, H.M.S. *Alacrity*, at our disposal for a long cruise.

Her captain was Commander Fuller, who was already known as one of the coming men, and he certainly justified his very high reputation, for after brilliant service during



the Great War he is now Vice-Admiral Cyril Fuller as well as a Commander-in-Chief. His personal charm and kindness are on a par with his great professional ability. To have one of his Majesty's ships of about 1,800 tons placed at one's disposal is an event which can occur but very seldom in anybody's life, and our cruise was of course a most delightful one. Our party consisted of my wife, our young son, and two officers of the Cameron Highlanders, one of them being Captain (now Colonel) A. B. Robertson, who is also destined to rise to high rank. The weather was all that could be desired, and amongst other places of interest we visited Chemulpo, Seoul, and Port Arthur, where the Japanese authorities received us in the most cordial and hospitable manner. It seemed, and was indeed, so odd that one should be on board a ship, start when one liked, stop when one liked, and go where one liked, so that the experience with all its manifold charms is naturally one which can never fade from memory.

Instead of giving a ball on the third of King Edward's birthdays, which we spent in Tientsin, my wife had another idea. The Germans at Tsingtao had an absolutely magnificent string band, which used to visit Tientsin every year and gave concerts which were the chief attraction of the place. The men were all musicians by training, so that one could not fairly compare this foreign band with a British one, and we engaged it for a concert at my residence on November 9, 1909. The concert was preceded by a dinner-party, where an unusual number of guests were able to be present by seating them at small round tables. The presence of the band was kept secret until the dining-room doors were thrown open when dinner was over, and then *God Save the King* formed the overture to the concert, to which a number of other guests were invited, and everybody seemed to appreciate the new departure.

In the following spring (1910) I took Mrs. Waters to Japan, as the opportunity was too good to lose, and, besides, the tour interested me very much also, as it was my first visit since 1897. A short time previously in Tientsin we had had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Mackenzie King, who was then Minister of

Labour in the Canadian Government, and subsequently became Prime Minister of his great country. He was visiting China and Japan in connexion with immigration questions, and was very interesting on the subject as well as very pleasant personally.

The restriction on oriental immigration into Canada and the Antipodes is not, I gathered, dictated by racial feeling in itself. This, no doubt, must arise when white citizens find themselves being shouldered aside by Eastern immigrants, who are exceedingly thrifty and hard-working, and whose standard of living is impossible for those of our race. Years ago in California it happened many times that the American landowners were ousted by the Easterner, and often had to work for him. This was bound to create ill-feeling, but it was only part of the problem for the Governments concerned.

Canada and the Antipodes are very sparsely populated ; they have huge unoccupied spaces, whereas China and Japan are packed with humanity. It is certain that unrestricted immigration must lead to myriads of Easterners leaving their own lands for others where they would find innumerable opportunities of advancement under a firm but lenient system of government. The result would inevitably be that the original owners would practically become subordinate to the new arrivals, who would swamp the Whites at all elections. The risk, nay the certainty, of this happening compels responsible British statesmen to adopt measures to prevent it, so Mr. King told me, and his argument really seems unchallengeable.

To pick up my threads, some changes which had occurred in Japan during the interval of thirteen years between my two visits were noticeable, even to my unpractised eye, in the great cities, the inferior quality of goods for sale being one of the most striking ; the beautiful Japanese art had been largely submerged by dreadful Western imitations. In 1897 I had watched Japanese artists at work on tiny vases, and it required months of incessant labour to produce one finished article. In 1910 these seemed difficult to find. No doubt the ever-increasing flood of tourists in a hurry, many of whom were blind to anything artistic,

had produced this sad result ; they were real *Innocents Abroad*, for they purchased heaps of things which had been turned out wholesale by machinery in Europe.

On the other hand, the places which we visited in the interior were quite unspoilt, and the innate kindness of the Japanese people was very apparent.

Mixed public bathing in a state of nature is the custom in Japan, where the temperature of the water is sometimes unbearable for a Westerner. We met a Canadian missionary and his wife in the interior, and they were accustomed to taking their baths in private. One day the missionary heard giggling just outside his room, and discovered that his attempts at concealment had been in vain, for one of the maids had pushed her finger through the wall—ordinary Japanese houses are practically built of paper, so you should be careful not to lean against a wall—and called the other servants, who saw all that there was to be seen.

Our friend expostulated with them, after hurriedly donning a dressing-gown, and then the truth came out. His desire to wash in private had been ascribed to some physical deformity which he was anxious to conceal, and Japanese curiosity was aroused in consequence. He was a well-made man, however, and was told : “ Fancy wishing to hide such a beautiful body.”

Our return journey was quite exciting in its way ; we were in a Japanese steamer whose commander had been in a torpedo-boat during the Russo-Japanese War, and, like others of his countrymen, he had no nerves. The ship had only one boiler, and so we had to stop every two hours for it to be cleaned out ; then the vessel caught fire from the sparks from the funnel, and as there was a highly inflammable cargo on board which no European steamer would carry, this was a cause of some anxiety until the flames were put out. One of the dense fogs so common in those waters enveloped us, and we literally could not see beyond the length of the ship. Our commander moreover chose the shortest route through waters which were mostly uncharted, and dashed along at full speed ; occasionally, when the fog was slightly less dense for a moment, we saw high rocks within a few yards of the steamer's side ; the

sea was, we were told, studded with them, and it was explained to us that the few lighthouses—which would have been useless in this case—which existed had been put out of business, because the Koreans used to murder the keepers so as to show what they felt about the Japanese.

Fortune favoured us, however, for some reason, but a sad shock awaited our arrival. On approaching Tientsin we noticed that the flags were all at half-mast; I don't know why, but we both exclaimed that this must be for King Edward, although we had not heard that he was even unwell. Our presentiment was but too true, and with his Majesty I lost a firm and ever most considerate friend, who had shown me many kindnesses during the preceding fifteen years.

The term of my command was now very near its end, and I was happily able to look back on an exceedingly interesting time, for our relations with our own people, the British mercantile community, foreign troops, and the Chinese had been most cordial. We had already sent our child home to school, and my wife left via Siberia, immediately after our return from Japan, her departure preceding mine by a few weeks, as she required a change of air.

We are naturally very proud of the affection with which she was regarded; Lance-Corporal Helsey wrote from Singapore that he was "requested by the old regiment (Middlesex) to send you their best wishes to yourself and the general"; this was a very touching compliment. One of the leading members of the British community, Mr. Mackay, also wrote to me on her departure that "we all loved Mrs. Waters."

The "brainy staff" at the War Office, which was being a good deal advertised in those days, did not always show to advantage where distant stations were concerned; no doubt it was fully occupied in preparing for the coming crash in Europe. In spite of my remonstrance it had insisted on dispatching a battalion once for North China to arrive in January, although it had been informed that navigation on the Pei-ho was closed by ice from December until March, so it had to disembark and wait at Hong-Kong for some time.

Just before I left China orders reached me from London to send all the Army Service Corps officers, and nearly all their men, home before the arrival of their reliefs in the autumn, so that there would have been an interregnum of two or three weeks; this meant in simple language an absence of bakers and butchers to ration the troops! I explained that while the air of North China in cool weather is very invigorating, it could not take the place of more substantial nourishment, but my attempt at pleasantry was not appreciated. On another occasion the War Office sent me a cablegram in cipher, but as it was one of the codes which that institution must have known I did not possess, the Department had to try again.

The War Office was often criticized for its parsimonious attitude, and the blame was usually laid upon its Finance Branch, but so far as my experience goes it was the Military Department which was miserly, although, of course, the former was there in order to look after the interests of the taxpayer.

It was with very real regret that I left China, where the future seemed ominous, in August 1910. Yuan-Shi-kai, as well as missionaries, had warned me, and the visible forces at work, noticeable sometimes even to ignorant observers like ourselves, showed that Chinese aspirations were beginning to assume a definite shape owing to the ever-increasing numbers of foreign-educated students, who were trying to evolve a national in place of a provincial patriotism.

The European Powers, however, seemed united in their resolve not to let go of China, so the reformers had no chance then of freeing her from the toils. In a few short years the scene changed, and the Chinese, progressives and reactionaries alike, united in their detestation of any foreign control, surveyed a Europe which they no longer feared, for she was exhausted by internecine struggles and animated by a longing for revenge. They concluded that their era had dawned, and Time shall show whether order is to be evolved out of chaos in China, or whether she also shall at last try to eat up herself.

## EPILOGUE

THE world has seen some wonderful changes during the sixty years which are skimmed over in these pages ; four European and two Eastern Empires, all of them great, have been replaced by Republics, but the chief result of the changes, far from proving beneficial to mankind, seems to have rendered racial passions more poignant than ever before. Some Governments foster these.

This was only to be expected in Europe, where the dominant international factor under both systems of government has hitherto been the "fatal specific of physical force." She is in a state of highly unstable equilibrium after her murderous struggles, which may have been only the prelude to still more horrible ones, and even this condition is only made possible by the want of money for further great adventures. I think that the financial pressure exercised by the United States is a real blessing to humanity by forcibly preventing, for the time being at any rate, a fresh upheaval in Europe too dreadful to contemplate. Unfortunately, the incalculable damage caused by the Great War has not been confined to her borders, but has also sadly tarnished her prestige in oriental eyes to an extent which cannot, I think, yet be estimated.

In the East the longing for freedom from Western interference has been acquiring ever fresh momentum. Turkey, in 1918, seemed dead, but has since become a Power to be seriously considered. China, torn by internal dissensions, appears to be united on one point, namely, her hatred of and contempt for the foreigner, and she feels that united pressure on her from outside is now practically at an end. If she cannot compose her own quarrels she may imitate Roumania and elect a Sovereign

from beyond her boundaries, in which event it is not unlikely that her sceptre shall pass into Japanese hands, and with it the undisputed sovereignty of the Far East with all its immeasurable potentialities.

The situation in China has undergone a remarkable change since 1900 ; the Boxer rising in that year was the greatest anti-foreign movement which had occurred, and it was engineered by the retrograde party which was bitterly opposed to reforms, and hated the foreigner. To-day, however, it is the ardent reformer, Young China, which is clamouring for "China for the Chinese," and wishes to adopt modern ways in order to attain this ideal.

It seems paradoxical to venture the statement that the Chinese reformers are desirous of adopting Western knowledge, methods, and arms, while simultaneously endeavouring to oust the Westerner, and especially the European, or at any rate to place him in an inferior position ; but may not the explanation be that they regard the instrument as the means to the end, and not as the end itself ?

It is time to cease these ramblings, and I sometimes think of a remark which is said to have been uttered by Mr. Arthur (now Lord) Balfour when he was in the House of Commons. A colleague in the Cabinet was delivering a long and tedious speech on some subject or other, and Mr. Balfour's neighbour, longing to go home to bed, asked him if he thought the speaker would ever finish.

"He finished long ago," was the answer, "but when he will stop is more than I can say."

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